

A Fury's Tribulation

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Summary: Hiccup shoots down the infamous Night Fury that's plagued Berk for the past five long years, but with a great victory comes a great sacrifice. What misfortune will fall upon him with his achievement? What lies beneath those luminous acidic eyes of the Night Fury?

1. Chapter 1: A Different Intention

AN: Hello! For those of you who may not know, I am the author for 'Truth and Reconciliation'. To give you guys and girls a short explanation, I have been very busy with the aforementioned story lately, but I have come across some sort of writer's block. While I could probably put out more and more chapters easily, I feel that the quality would suffer greatly.

Disclaimer: I do not own How to Train Your Dragon, or anything related to it.

To keep myself from destroying 'Truth and Reconciliation', I have started working on something new and something different. I will go ahead and let you know that I am completely unoriginal and uncreative. I can't figure out my own story plot so I am working off of an already used and reused plot-bunny. Hopefully you enjoy my rendition of this type of story.

I give you:

* * *

><p>A Fury's Tribulation<p>

A Different Intention

* * *

><p>I came in fast, faster than I would have liked. My body slammed into the treetops at an alarming rate, ripping scales and piercing my hide along the way. Eventually I lost enough speed to hit a tree straight on.<p>

Excellent.

At least the tree was on its last leg of life already. My side took most of the impact as I broke the full size timber in two. As I passed over the break in the tree, I felt the jagged edge tear skin from my tail; I hurled towards the ground and crashed into the awaiting earth to break my fall.

I slid down the hillside, carving a deep trench into the soil. I flailed my claws wildly as I attempted to slow my decent. Apparently nature thought my voyage should not have been finished so soon. A lip at the bottom of the hill threw me into the air once more, only to allow me to successfully impact the ground yet again.

_That _was unpleasantâ€|.

Maybe living life on the ground would be a better, no, _healthier_ alternative. I groaned as I came to rest on my aching side. I looked up at the path of destruction that I carved through the foliage above me, and up at that useless black fin dangling caught in the dead tree. That fin, what was once part of me, flapped along in the wind as if it were laughing at me.

|| Noâ€|. ||

I felt my heart drop inside of my chest as I closed my eyes. I've seen what happens to other people of my species when they lose a wing or a fin; it doesn't take long.

That cursed mortal that laced this cable trap around my perfect body; he would suffer for what he has done to me. Those other members of the dragon species, the ones who lost their limbs, I could see every one of their faces as they were broken down little by little in agony and defeat.

I would now join them.

That tail hanging in the wind, shredded at the edge of its link, it would be the death of me.

I let out a moan of pain and anguish as I struggled against that impeccable harness of ropes and stones. Why couldn't I have just gone a little bit faster, been slightly lower, waited a second longer, anything? Anything that could have prevented this ruthless entrapment from encasing my wings.

I guess you're wondering how I came to be in this mess as a Dark Sentry, if you could call me that anymore.

It all started at the Isle. This place didn't have a _true _name, the only reason we called it the Isle was for a reference. You couldn't put a name on something so wretched, so vulgar, and so heinous. This place reeked of sulfur and ash; it was surrounded by a death cloud of fog and mist so not even the gods would have to look at it. Why was this place so horrifying?

The Empress.

A being of such loathing and hatred that demons themselves wouldn't veer into her path. She murdered for the fun of it, and tormented those under her will for amusement. If you didn't fall into her line of command, well, say hello to my ancestors in the afterlife if you would.

I can't explain the sheer size alone that she possesses. The volcano in which she resides is nearly bursting at the seams to contain her girth. I guess if I had two thousand dragon slaves bringing me meals twice a day, I would become her size as well.

Two thousand dragonsâ€¦two thousand members of _my _species unwillingly giving in to her will to keep her alive. It still amazes me how every one of them will wake up every day and bow down to her; every day and succumb to her call; every day without thinking about what they have lost.

That's what I have done.

For five long years, that's what I've done. Only for me, it's different. Those weak minded excuses for a dragon can't impede her call. Do I feel it? Yes, but I may be the only one that seems to push it aside.

I've tried to reason with the other dragons, but none of them accepted my guidance. I've tried to level with the Infernhide; I've tried to teach the Spikeshooters; I've even tried to assist the Boulderbelchers. None of them, not a single one, will listen. They only believe the lies.

The liesâ€¦ I never would have imagined a place filled with so many horrible lies. The power she seems to hold over them; it's all a lie.

The fire within a dragon is vital for its existence. A dragon's fire is what keeps them going, it's what keeps them alive, and it's what _defines_ them. A dragon's fire is a clear representation of their health and well-being; if it's slow and ineffective, they're dying; if it's quick and responsive, while destroying the target, the dragon should have many years ahead.

_This _is how the Empress controls them. _This _is how she reduces them down to her irrational servants. She declares that she could steal their fire. A dragon with no fire would be a soulless creature, a lost imitation of their body, a mindless drone; there would be no reason to live.

I'm not sure how she convinced them of these lies. When I arrived at the Isle, all had already been lost. Any newcomers would be quickly brainwashed to believe that even if they were to try and flee, she could still extinguish their flames within.

They tried to warn me of her power, they tried to manipulate me into being one of her pets. A Dark Sentry is no pet.

As I said earlier, I may be the only one to reject her call. The calls that send us away, the calls that command us to bring her the

meals she needs to survive.

It all started with a call.

I was standing on the ledge that leads from the center of the volcano. I spent most of my days on that ledge; it was the only place that I could seem to findâ€¦..ambiance. If you were to stay on the inside of the lava mountain, then there was no ambiance, there was no peace; all there wasâ€¦..was fear.

I stood on that ledge that which gave me a bleak overlook into the desolate murkiness. It was still better than being with the filth that swarmed the inside of the mountain behind me. I gazed out to see hoping that maybe just one dragon would listen to me; just one would come to sense and leave, just one.

I thought my wish had come true when an Infernohide came walking out on my ledge, but all hope was lost once he spoke. |{ Dark Sentry, it's almost time for the invasion. There are rumors that we will be returning to the Isle of Death. }| It wasn't actually called the Isle of Death; that was conjured from losing so many dragons. We've heard the name being shouted as the mortals attacked us. The screams of Berk.

We hated going to the Isle of Death; it was too risky. We could lose as many as ten dragons per invasion at that island. The only reason we keep going back was because the catch is of much larger feed at that island.

I lowered my head and sighed as the Infernohide awaited a response. If only we could stop this madness, if only we could change the way things worked. I turned my head towards my fellow dragon and looked at him in sorrow. || Don't you ever wonder what it would be like if things wereâ€¦..different? Like a life away from the Empress? ||

The Infernohide just sighed, disregarding the thought. |{ You know our purpose here; you need to stop trying to change the minds of everyone around you. Your fortunate the Empress has allowed you to live as long as you have. }|

Like I saidâ€¦..lost.

I shook my head still not understanding how these dragons have convinced themselves so wrong. || Do you really think that you're better off under her control? ||

The dragon came up to my side so he could glare at me face to face. |{ You know that we are better off in her care. She gives us life, she gives us freedom, she makes usâ€¦..}|

|| Slaves. || The dragon narrowed his eyes at me in disgrace. He had the same amount of bewilderment towards me as I did for him. How could _I _be so un-loyal to her? How could _I _be so disrespectful of the one who _let _me live? He rolled his eyes at me and turned to walk away in grief. |{ Just be ready for the invasion Dark Sentry! You know your duty and you're expected to honor it. }|

It wasn't much longer until she raised the call. My ear plates shook as she sent her orders. I cringed as her wretched voice reverberated through my mind. My side sensors throbbed as the Isle of Death was

named our next target. She let loose a final vicious roar that was echoed through the cave, promoting everyone into the air and onto our targets.

Not everyone is sent to the Isle of Death, only about fifty of us are sent to the invasion; the rest of the group was usually assigned to either bring in local catches or to other isolated villages. Only those that are the most able-bodied and agile are assigned to the invasion; it becomes far too dangerous for the younglings and slower dragons to come along.

It was all a game to the Empress: if she was satisfied with the catch, we continued to live in peace. If she was left wanting more, death would haunt us all. The first to go were the hurt and elderly. If one was to be injured in an invasion, they would have a better chance living away from the Isle. At first she may seem to comfort you, but when you turn your back for just a moment or you are called to pay her respect, it would be the last you were seen.

I watched as the enormous drove above me beat their wings to escape the Isle for the invasion. They all knew better than to stick around, because the last one outâ€|well, there never really was one.

I lowered my head once more and heaved a sigh of anguish. _We shouldn't be doing this. Everything we doâ€|..is wrong._

The last few dragons escaped the top of the mountain and a final yelp chased them out, sending a shiver down my spine; tonight's victim was a Spikeshooter. With one claw, I carved a line into the stone beneath me, completing the set of five. I slowly looked up from where my paw rested and gazed upon each set, another five upon five that had been lost because of her game. I closed my eyes once more and saw every one of those dragons that had been lost over the past five years.

I leapt from my ledge and beat my wings in the direction of the Isle of Death, leaving behind the crude markings that covered every inch of the rock shelf where I settled.

The flight from the Isle to what the mortals call _Berk _was never one of my favorites. Every time we would head there, I could only pray that our numbers could come back the same. I stayed in the back of the drove as they advanced on the Isle of Death. My time would come later in the invasion.

First, the Infernhide would capture as much prey as possible without the mortals becoming aware. Next were the Boulderbelchers, who swept in and ripped from the ground all of the fish racks. By this time all of the mortals have awakened and would have been fighting back with a deadly force.

I watched as a Four-Eye filled one of the buildings with its highly explosive gas while the second head ignited the gas from below. I winced as a flaming mortal came barreling from his home, heading directly for the sea.

I wasn't fond of killing these mortals as I didn't see the point. There simply defending themselves; who wouldn't fight back as fifty ruthless dragons week after week would invade their village?

I never took part in retrieving the catch. I never allowed myself to

be seen. I didn't need to. The Empress knew I was far too important for her to take my life. If I were not around during the invasions, she would be lucky to get any meal at all.

I had a specific purpose; when the dragons were struggling, I was to fly in and take out the launchers. The launchers were our biggest threat and could take out multiple dragons with one shot. I had to wait until I was needed; too soon, the mortals would have time to roll out smaller and more portable launchers. Too lateâ€¦ it was self-explanatory.

I saw my cue; the Infernohide taking a severe beating from the alpha male of the village. It was time to take out the main tower. I angled my dive and gathered oxygen within my lungs to fuel my fire. The infamous whistle sounded my position and denoted the Infernohide to flee. I heard the usual screams of terror as the mortals ducked into cover.

"Night Fury! Get down!"

Night Furyâ€¦.Now _that's_ a good name for someone of _my_ stature. I have been called many things, and by far, 'Night Fury' is the best. A perfect description of my dark obsidian appearance and the havoc I wreaked on their village; it was a suitable title for a dragon that should be feared by all.

Sorry, I'm rambling slightly. Have to stop that before it becomes a nasty habit.

The alpha male mortal leapt from the tower just before my blast impacted on the tower. I swooped down past my raging destruction just as the tower collapsed, giving the mortals a view of the faint outline of what _might_ be a 'Night Fury'.

They were smart to be afraid. They _should_ be afraid. My accuracy was second to none. I had the most deadly blast of plasma this side of the Atlantic; probably further. I _had_ no Achilles heel; I _had_ no weakness; I _had_ no limitations; _I_ am a Dark Sentry.

According to the grapevine, that isâ€¦.

Once high in the sky I saw that the tower was only half-obliterated. || That just won't do. || I angled my wings to allow me to strike that tower once more. The whistle gave me a rapid sensation of confidence. I closed my eyes and fired that viscous liquid straight and true, annihilating the rest of that worthless structure.

The one joy I found in coming to these invasions was blowing up those brainless mortal's trivial little launchers. If those people wouldn't just keep rebuilding them, I may not come at all. It's almost as if they're asking me to destroy them.

Like now, for example; they leave this launcher out in the dark and have no one inside to man it. It's loaded and ready to fire, and just needs someone to pull the trigger. This happens almost every week. They build these massive buildings, leave them uninhabited, and persuade me to destroy them.

Maybe it's what they _want_ me to do. Maybe they're planning to get revenge on me and are setting a trap.

A Boulderbelcher flew up alongside me for what I was assuming to thank me for my efforts. |{ What are you some kind of foolish dingbat? }|

Or notâ€|.

|{ You _know _not to go in for a second pass. You could have been killed! }| I snorted and rolled my eyes leisurely. || You really think I would let that happen? || The Boulderbelcher shook his head and gave me a look of disgust. || It doesn't matter what you _think_ you can do; you _never _go in for a second pass! You are supposed to be a Dark Sentryâ€|Sentry! Do you even know what that means? }|

The dragon was testing his patience with me dearly. I was not one to be lectured on how to do my job at hand, especially by someone who can't even _think_ for themselves. I gave a menacing snarl to the ridiculous looking dragon as I narrowed my eyes into a death stare. || Do NOT tell me how to complete my task you insignificant little Boulderbelcher. I know exactly what my purpose is here. Would you like me to iterate yours? ||

The dragon was set in his place; he knew that his role was unimportant and he had no right on lecturing me. He gave one last grunt and turned to fly away. |{ It doesn't matter; were done here. It's time to return to the Isle. }|

Great. Now I don't even have time to blow up that last standing launcher. I snorted and turned to fly back to the Isle. I'd rather be plummeting into the gates of hellâ€|.

Screw it!

I twisted midair and threw myself into one last impressive dive to demolish that final tower. My whistle seemingly enhanced my speed and I gave that perfect blast of plasma to break my objective down into nothing but remnants. I soared past the wreckage and basked in the glory.

For about three seconds.

A sudden snap caught my attention, and suddenly I was encased within this vine trap in which swallowed me whole. One final roar in anger escaped my throat as I plunged towards the treetops at a greatly increasing speed.

So here I lay, entangled in this heap of what appeared to be a Dark Sentry, waiting for death to come and greet me. Maybe he would have mercy on my soul; maybe if I wasn't a dragon. If only I didn't take that last swing towards the tower, if only I wasn't so caught up in destroying those meaningless structures, I may have lived to see another day.

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Walking through the forest while searching for the most dark and

reclusive dragon ever know was starting to seem a bitâ€|wrong. I kicked a defenseless stone and watched it as it tumbled down the hill before me.

Why doesn't anyone ever believe me? Why does everyone assume that just because I'm 'Hiccup the Useless' means that I could never do anything worth mentioning?

I mean sure, there have been a few times where I _may_ have played the part in the boy who cried dragon, but who hasn't? I know I hit that Night Fury; I saw it plunge to Raven's Point right before me!

Well, maybe not quite Raven's Point.

I have searched nearly the entire west side of this dejected island, and still no trace of that dragon. My notebook was becoming blacker with X's than the tan of the page.

Face it; my life sucks. You don't have to tell me twice. I've been wasting away on this island for far too long. Ever since mom died, everything's beenâ€|different.

Maybe _she_ would believe me about the Night Fury. Who am I kidding? Not even she would believe me, but at least she would go along with it to make me feel better. It feels like it was just yesterday when she died, but it wasn'tâ€|.it's been five long years.

It had been raining that night; no, it was down pouring. I remember hearing the first shouts that the dragons were attacking. It was so wrong; the dragons _never_ attacked when it was raining. Everyone got into position, and everything was going along like normal, well, normal for a dragon raid.

Then were heard it: the high pitched whistle that stopped everyone dead in their tracks. Everyone turned to each other confused; what was that sound? Even mom, who was taking control of the head watch tower stopped to figure out what the obscure sound was.

We were hitâ€|.hit hard.

No one had ever before seen such a powerful blast come from a dragon. At least, that's what we assumed it was. The blue fire struck the tower with an incredible force. No one had even thought about leaping away; it was an unknown entity.

Like I said, _everything_ _has_ been different.

Dad promised me that night as we huddled around her lifeless body that he would change. I'm sure he meant for the better, but no one knew that the raids were going to become worse and worse as the new dragon started participating more and more. The Vikings soon dubbed the deadly creature 'Night Fury', because it only attacked on the darkest of nights. Soon it seemed like almost every raid we had, involved that fatal dragon. We didn't know if it was one, or ten of them; all we knew was when the name of the dragon was screamed and we heard that fateful whistle, we had to get down.

I guess dad just was never able to make time for me anymore. We no longer took those fishing trips, where I would end up wandering off

looking for trolls. We stopped having meals together. He even forced me to work with Gobber so he wouldn't have to look after me.

Dad was always so busy. It seemed like he never had the _desire_ spend time with me. I've tried so hard to impress him, but it always ends in a disaster. Now it's gotten to the point where avoiding each other seems easier than spending time together.

I closed my eyes and walked over the crest of the hill I've been longing for. Once I felt the ground even out below me I sprang my eyes open as if my mom was preparing my favorite meal to surprise me. Alas, there was no fresh mutton, nor the reclusive dragon I've been after this whole time. Even while being bound up by a bola, the dragon _still_ _managed_ to conceal itself to the point of not being found.

I started my quest onward once again as I crossed off, yet another spot on my drawing of Berk. I guess the agony of the moment set me off, because I ended up scribbling off the entire page with my temper.

"Oh the gods hate me." Bork the Bold had better luck than I do. Gobber told me the legend about Bork; apparently he was originally known as Bork the Very, Very Unfortunate. I guess 'Hiccup' isn't quite as bad as it seems.

Anyways, how can someone manage to lose a dragon! "Some people lose their knife or their mug; no, not me, I manage to lose an entire dragon!" I slapped a branch that was hanging off of a dead tree.

Not my brightest endeavor.

Apparently the Vikings weren't the only ones upset with me; Mother Nature had to join in and show me _her_ disgrace.

After I walked past the repulsive stick I looked up at the dead tree it sprouted from. Why is this tree broken in half? I gazed down the path of destruction and was astonished to see a three foot trench carved out from the hillside. What could have done this? There were immense claw marks engraved into the bark of the tree.

Evidently something big.

I leapt down into the trench and cautiously made my way over to a small lip in the hillside. Was this the dragon I've been searching for? Was this the dreaded Night Fury, finally brought down by the hands of a Viking?

My heart was ready to leap from my chest as I neared the edge of the lip. I slowly started to peer over the edge, only to immediately jerk back from the quick glance of a black dragon waiting on the other side.

Please don't let it have seen me; please don't let it have seen me. I listened for any movement on the other side of the ledge. Nothing; nothing at all. Maybe the dragon was already dead. We've come across dead dragons before, mostly because some other Viking got there first, or its killer was lurking nearby.

I took a deep breath and inched my vision over the lip. _There it

is!_ The dragon that's caused this whole ordeal, the dragon that's kept me in this dreaded forest all day.

The Night Fury.

It was a magnificent sight; it truly was. A Night Fury: the dragon that killed my mother, the dragon that's brought so much destruction to our village, the dragon that has caused so much pain, trapped in _my_ bola. And Gobber said my inventions were all useless. I couldn't wait to show him the power that my bola launcher contained.

I jumped over the lip and slid down hill to hide just behind a large rock. I took my knife from the sheath and sent a silent prayer to the gods to watch over me. I took one final breath and lunged around the boulder to meet the downed dragon.

"Oh wow! I-I did it! Ohhhh I did it! This fixes everything! Yes!" I brought my leg up to show that I conquered the Night Fury. "_I _have brought down this mighty beast!" I pressed my foot into the leg of the menacing dragon in satisfaction.

The dragon had a different intention about my smugness.

As the dragon shrugged its shoulder and threw me off of its side, I gasped in horror of its living soul. I lay against the rock for just a moment as I attempted to grasp some air. Why is this dragon still alive? Why did it not die in the fall like any other dragon would have?

I gradually shifted my way forward as I pointed my knife straight towards the beast. I kept my arms locked with the knife directly in front. I guess I looked rather pathetic from another's point of view.

I gazed across the beaten dragons body as I inched myself closer. _How is this dragon still breathing?_ I glanced towards the wing that was still entangled in my bola's rope. Several gashes were cut into the membrane that held the wing in one piece. I rotated my vision towards the beasts head. Along the way I could see every one of the deep wounds still bleeding from the dragon's body. Its claws were still unsheathed from when it was tearing across the ground after it landed. I slowly looked up to the head of the beast.

Its eye. Its eye was slit open as it gave me the look of resentment. The dragon gave a lengthy groan as it peered into my soul. I shivered as I felt the reverberations coming from the beast. I glanced away from the Night Fury's stare and looked to my knife. I took a few deep breaths to help me accomplish what needed to be done.

I stared back down to the beast's head and wielded my knife threateningly. "I'm going to kill you dragon. I'm gonna- I'm gonna cut out your heart and take it to my father. I am a Viking." I lurched myself towards to beast's head to show my dominance. "I am a Viking!"

The beast gave a moan of discontentment as I roared to its face. I raised my knife above my head, ready to strike. I quickly glanced towards the beast as if it could have one final word. The Night Fury glared into me as it seemingly begged for my mercy. I shook my head from its gaze to give no hope of survival. It groaned as our gazes

broke, letting its head thump back down on the ground.

I lifted the knife up and prepared for the blow, and even began the lunge towards the beast. My arms just wouldn't finish the task. I couldn't do it. _Why was this so hard?_ We've killed thousands of these dragons; why should this one be any different? My hands holding the blade plopped down on top of my head as I realized I couldn't do this.

I brought my hands down to rest at my side as I watched the enormous breaths escape from the beast. The Night Fury looked so beautiful; I never thought a dragon could be so stunningly gorgeous. Even while covered with cuts and bleeding wounds, this dragon looked greater than any other I've seen. I looked at the ropes constricting the airflow throughout the dragon's body. I saw the tension that was being forced into the Night Fury's muscles, I backed away.

"I did this." I twisted myself around to head back to the village; only to stop and return my gaze to the beast. I can't just leave it. What if someone else comes along and finishes the job?

I shrugged one final time and lowered my head in disgrace. Was I about to free this dragon?

Yes, yes I was.

I shot down to the dragon's side and sliced my way through the ropes with my knife, each one loosening their hold on the beast. One last cord; I pierced the strands and cut through as fast as possible. I turned my head and prepared to run.

The dragon had a different intention.

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Plasma-

Noun-

An ionized state of matter.

_The highly viscous liquid that __surrounds __chromosomes__ and nucleoli. _

The liquid part of blood or lymph, as distinguished from the suspended elements.

_A __living__ substance that __lives__ within the cell._

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DNA-

Noun-

A deoxyribonucleic acid.

_An extremely long macromolecule that is the main component of
__chromosomes__ and is the material that transfers genetic
characteristics in __all__ life forms._

_A molecule that encodes the genetic instructions used in the
development and functioning of __all__ known __living__
organisms._

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Genetic Mutation-

Noun-

_Any event that changes genetic structure; any alteration in the
__inherited__ nucleic acid sequence of the genotype of an
organism._

_Results__ from unrepaired damage to __DNA._

Related words-

_Mutating- __Verb_

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So this is the mortal that brought me down. This is the one that has
caused me so much pain, so much agony, and so much misery; the one
that effectively scripted my death. I pressed my claws down onto the
boy's neck, further entrapping him in my grasp.

Is _this _all the mortals think I'm worth: a scrawny little
hatchling? How could they send one of their younglings to execute a
Dark Sentry?

I starred deep into his eyes, the color forest green with a hint of
acid, so close to my very own. I squinted down at him slightly; I've
never seen anyone with eyes that imitate my own.

He cringed and scooted himself as much as my paw would allow. _Do you
really think I would **let **you escape puny mortal? No; I'm not as
careless as you. I will have you suffer my wrath._

I gave several powerful breaths, each one rumbling a deadly growl
within. In which way shall you perish tiny mortal? I refreshed my
mind on how I had slaughtered my previous victims: the shredding of
their insides with my razor-like claws, the impeccable single blast
from within, my incredible jaw strength tearing away their
skull.

No; **you** deserve something new and un-attempted.

An onslaught of plasma, one of the only methods I've never had the
pleasure of trying. A constant stream of the deadly vicious liquid

should give this human the perfect amount of pain I want him to endure.

I inhaled some oxygen within my throat as I raised my self above the mortal's body. I glanced down once more; the boy was using his stringy arms to shield himself as if they were going to protect him. _There's no use puny mortal. Now, you die._

I felt the fire build to the perfect saturation within my throat and I unleashed its raging fury. The cobalt fluid descended rapidly onto the boy's chest, resulting in a violent shriek of pain from the boy.

Music to my ears.

I continued the blast of viscous liquid until the boy was lying at limp. I pulled away from the motionless body in satisfaction. The carcass was steaming from the massive wound across his chest. Plasma was eating through each layer of tissue, plunging through the membrane of organs and bone.

I narrowed my eyes once more at the hideous body below me. _No one_ takes down a Dark Sentry. I shook my head in disgust and turned to flee, leaving behind my glorious work for others to enjoy.

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Hiccup's still form lay sprawled out across the ground as the plasma burned through the flesh and bones. The highly viscous liquid seeped down through the skin and tissue and pierced the veins that ran through the boy's body.

There, the foreign plasma mixed with the blood that was still flowing towards the main artery. Chromosomes and DNA were coated with the viscous material, forming an encasement around the ribonucleic structure.

The freshly encoded DNA worked its way through the veins and into the heart as it gave a few final beats. The cadaver jerked as plasma started to work with the tissue cells to regenerate the destroyed tissue. Skin was speedily scabbing over the infected wound while the plasma spread violently through the boy's body.

Black skin.

The outer shell of the limp body started fading to an obsidian mass while new limbs started sprawling out of the corpse. A long tail continued out from the spinal cord, stretching far past the length of the body. Two bulging lumps appeared from behind and grew to be a full set of immense wings; the force with which they extended flipped the dark body over onto its chest.

The boy's face started morphing and mutating into a head with a short snout and large ear plates. Acid green streaks appeared in several spots across the body, mimicking the appearance of scar tissue over a number of deep gashes, healing to an unnatural shade. A newly

restored heart beat forcefully within the dragons chest, pumping the altered DNA throughout the changed body it inhabited.

Air began flowing through the dragon's snout as the chest started to heave prominently. The eyelids on the beast shivered slightly as a distinct moan was released from the dragon's throat.

The Night Fury's eyes shot open to reveal refined slits, revealing the forest green with a hint of acid.

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><p>AN:First off, I would like to personally thank: GuySuper, June Odyssey, and Gift of the Dragons. If it was not for them, this story would not be what it has become. That's right we don't have 1, not 2, but 3 beta readers for this story. Hopefully I don't let you and them all down by messing this up. I highly recommend reading the stories that these three authors have written. They are very well written and definitely worth your time.<p>

What do you all think? Is this worth continuing? Has all my time and effort, as well as the betas, been worth your time to read?

Please review your opinion and let me know.

Thank you!

2. Chapter 2: The Cold Truth

An: I give you:

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><p>A Fury's Tribulation<p>

The Cold Truth

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><p>There are many benefits to being a dragon. One may imagine that breathing fire would be an excellent example, or one may think that having well-built scales would give them an advantage, but I assure you, if there is one thing that I would take over anything else to be a dragon, it would be the flight.<p>

There is nothing more glorious than beating your wings and tilting your fins to gusts of the wind. It may seem like a lot of exertion: the continuous flapping of those powerful wings, the constant adjustments that need to be made to the trailing and tail fins, the strain of breathing the thin amount of oxygen. It's all worth it once you're in the air. All of the fine tuning and the effort that is put forth just seems to fade away, like you're not even doing it.

I can't simply explain the beauty and magnificence that is witnessed once in the sky. Once you reach the skies, there is no one else in the world except yourself. The atmosphere has a way of enhancing ones senses; it brings out the entire splendor that the world has to

offer. The colors are more bright and vivid, the smells are cool and refreshing, and the sounds are of peace and tranquility. To put it simply, it would be the closest place to heaven without breaching the barrier itself.

It's a place that I will never have the opportunity to access again.

I lay down across the ground and let out a moan in sorrow. There was nothing that could be done to hurt a dragon more than to take away its flight. I could feel my heart beating slower than normal; it too, was feeling the pain and agony of not being able to fly. I rested my head down on my paws to peer out to sea. I watched as the birds and eagles hovered over the vast open water. I could feel my eyes beginning to fill with a salty liquid as I envied the creatures of the sky. I was once one of those. I was one of the most feared and agile creatures to ever inhabit air biome.

A Dark Sentry

Why did I have to be a Dark Sentry? Why did I have to be a part of the most endangered and reclusive species of dragons? If I was any other type, any at all, I would have had a chance. I saw three Spikeshooters fly through an archway that was just out to sea. A tear began to roll down my face as I knew I could never join them in that wonderful movement.

Now would be the perfect time to come across another Dark Sentry, but sadly, I have never had the benefit of seeing another one my entire life. Being born of the smallest, smartest and most powerful of dragon species has its benefits as well as its hindrances.

I never met my mother or father; evidently it's customary for the hatchlings of my species to develop on their own. If they last until adulthood, then they are worthy of being a Dark Sentry. To put it plain and simple, it's a hard life from the start.

I watched as my fellow dragons disappeared over the crest of the horizon. _They have no idea how lucky they are. _Life is easy for the other dragons, they are born into a loving and caring family, they are taught how to fly and protect themselves, and they potentially could even heal themselves from an injury such as mine. I let out a long breath and eyed the sea below.

It all comes down to the dragon's fire.

A dragon's fire is so much more powerful than it appears. If used in the right method, it can even regenerate a lost limb or heal a vicious wound.

I brought my tail around for my inspection; blood was still oozing from the sudden amputation. I noticed that some old bark and grass had gotten lodged into the crevice of the wound. They say that licking one's wounds can help cure the pain and help it to heal. I'm not sure if what they say is true, but I figure it doesn't hurt to try. I cocked my head slightly and began to roll my tongue up the side of my newly lightened tail. I will say that the cleaning of the blood and debris does seem to lessen the stinging; If only it could grow back.

Once satisfied that my tail could heal properly, I rose myself up and walked into the forest to find a stream of water.

Walked.

Something dragons very seldom do is walk. It's not that we don't enjoy walking, but we prefer the flying. Once you have witnessed the sky for what it has to offer, nothing else can compare. I headed deeper into the forest to find the stream. It wasn't too bad of a walk. If it weren't for the deadly mortals that inhabited this dejected island, then it would make a suitable place to reside in.

I've made my way through many places in my lifetime. I don't even know why I've insisted on staying with the helpless dragons back at the Isle. That dreaded volcano has definitely been the worst of my travels. The dragons are missing out on so much by being held within that tomb of a cave.

The other dragons don't even realize on what they are missing out on. I often wonder if they have ever thought about what they have left behind. The families that they used to attend to, the protection of their closest friends; they left all of it behind.

I came upon a deep cove that had a small pond at the bottom. From up at the edge and peering down, it looked so peaceful and serene. I was sure that there would be plenty of fish within that pond to keep me alive and well. I slowly made my way around the rim of the cove to make sure that there were no inhabitants. The last thing I needed was some family of mortals living down by the pond and trying to kill me while I devour the fish from within.

The cove seemed completely vacant. Just the soothing sounds of the birds and water rustling slightly. I looked over to the other side of the cove and noticed a large tree climbing the side of the cliff. It would provide a perfect resting place and enough cover from the rain in case of such inclement weather.

Without another thought I leapt over the edge and glided down to the bottom where the tree sprouted from the ground. I hit the ground and jogged over to the edge of the pond. The water was crystal clear and was filled with many fish from what I could see.

I drank some of the cool refreshing water and looked up to admire my new retreat. _Wow, that Cliff side is much higher than I thought; how am I going to get out of here if my tail isâ€¦|..? _

Ohhh crap.

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I took a deep breath and felt my head spinning with an awful sensation running through my body. It was almost as if my body was asleep even though I was awake. I took some heavy breaths to help wake myself up. My breathing seemed so much louder than normal._ What

happened to me?_

I could feel my muscles tense as I attempted to move them. My head was throbbing as I clenched my eyelids closed. My chest felt as if it was on fire; I could feel a painful burning sensation across my torso and stomach. _What __**did**__ happen to me?_

I tried to remember what I was doing last. I had been walking through the forest, tracking something. I couldn't remember what it wasâ€¦|.._Dragon! _I had been tracking a dragon; a Night Fury. I was walking through the forest and saw it. I remembered the desperate look on the dragon's face and Iâ€¦|.I cut it free.

My mind seemed to go blank after that. It could faintly remember the dragon pouncing, but on what? Me? My mind flashed back to the dragon's face. It was much closer, almost touching my own. I could see the hatred in its eyes. The Night Fury had leaned back and started to build up a fire blast, thenâ€¦|.

It killed me, didn't it?

My eyes shot open to see the forest floor in front of me. I was still at the place where I freed the dragon. The cut bola was right in front of me. _How am I still alive? Why do I feel so heavy and hot?_

I closed my eyes once more and shook my head trying to get rid of this throbbing. I let out a long moan of pain, the sound resembling the Night Fury as it dropped its head in defeat. _Why do I sound soâ€¦|.different?_ I lifted my eyelids open and started to stretch my paws out in front of me.

PAWS!?!

I frantically started waving the draconic limbs in front me, opening and closing my eyes to see if they would go away. _There is no way. I don't have paws. _I quickly turned my head and came across the body of a Night Fury. _That's __**my**__ body! _I couldn't believe the sight before me. Attached to me was a long slender black body that had two massive wings and aâ€¦|..TAIL!

I quickly go to my feet, er, um, paws and started running around trying to get away from the body. "No, no, no, no, no!" _This isn't me I have to be dreaming. No of this has happened. _I saw a large tree in front of me and decided that I should bash my head into it. I thought that I could wake myself up with a good hit. I ran forward and drilled my forehead straight into the side of the large tree.

Again, not my brightest endeavor.

I stumbled to the side and fell back down on the ground. Now my head had two reasons to throb. I let out another dragon moan and clenched my eyes shut. "This isn't happening." All I heard was growling and hissing. "What?" A frantic sounding croon. "Hello?" Again, more croons. I dropped my head to the ground and let out a long sigh. _Great, now I can't even __**speak**__ normal. _

I tried to figure out what was happening to me. Why was I a dragon? Why would I have not died from the Night Fury's blast. I craned my

head around to see my body once again. I tried to extend the massive wings and lash my tail, but it was as if the extra limbs weren't even there. I couldn't believe what was before me, or just me. _How could __**I**__ be a Night Fury?_

I looked over the body I was connected to, the sleek black finish across the scales and acid green scars spread across my body. I didn't remember the other Night Fury having those marks on _his_ body. I slowly started to get to my paws again, shaking while doing so. I took several deep breaths and turned towards the village to go home.

Home.

As I started my trek towards the village I started thinking about all the people there that would kill me on sight. I made it to the top of the hill and paused. _If I go back, then they will kill me for sure._ I dropped my head and let out short moan.

I couldn't go back. If the villagers saw me like this, I wouldn't last five seconds; I couldn't go, wouldn't. I raised my head and let out a deep sigh. _Why me? Why did I have to shoot down that Night Fury? Why didn't I just kill him like anyone else would have? _I looked back up towards the village once more and turned to head the other direction.

There was no use in going back. Even if I wasn't the dragon that I was now, all of the villagers hated me anyway. That look that my father had given me right before he commanded Gobber to take me home; that was one of sheer disappointment. It's not like I tried to screw up, it was an accident. I guess Hiccup is a fitting name after all; I just wished it wasn't 'Hiccup the Useless'.

I made it back to where my bola lay in shreds. _Stupid bola launcher. If you hadn't worked like every other one of my inventions, I would still be a human right now. _I lied down and rest my head on the ground. What was the point? If I were to stay out in the forest, someone would eventually find me. If I were to go back, I would be the first Night Fury to be seen, and the first to be slain.

I let out a shaky breath as my eyes started to fill with tears. The situation was starting to set in on me. I could never go back to see my father. I could never see the other teens. I could never see Gobber. As my vision started to blur I tightened my eyelids together and felt the tears stream down my face.

I literally had no one now. Even before, I could occasionally go to my father when in need or in pain. I used to be able to go to Gobber for advice and counsel. Now, I had no one.

I felt my wings drop to my side as if they were somehow attached to my emotions. I couldn't even figure out how to open them, but they had begun mocking my sadness by drooping lower and lower.

I try and curl in to myself to keep my body heat from escaping. It wasn't unnaturally cold out right now, but I knew that the temperature would soon be dropping for the night. Nights on Berk were always cold, and even in the blazing heat of the summer, it could still reach freezing at night.

I managed to wrap my tail around my body and shield my face from the outside world. The sun was beginning to set and it was going to be dark shortly. This was the first time that I would be spending the night out in the woods alone. My father and I had taken a few camping trips over the years, but he was always there to protect me. Now, I was alone.

Completely alone.

The sun's light finally slipped away and the only light that shed on the forest was from the dim crescent moon that was out tonight. I heard some movement in the woods behind me, followed by a long howl in the distance from a hungry wolf.

I tried to make myself seem smaller as I compressed my body together. _Please don't find me, please don't find me. _I had practically zero skills in defending myself as a human. I wouldn't have the first clue as a dragon.

The movement grew louder and closer. I could practically _feel _the presence of the wild animals. _No, no, no, no, no! Please just go away._

My luck was never that good.

I heard one vicious growl from my side and quickly glanced up to see the adversary. It was staring right at me. Slobber dripping from its mouth and teeth ready to bite into me and make me into a delectable banquet. I got to my feet and quickly started backing up away from the deadly wolf.

I only stopped when another ferocious growl came from behind me. I closed my eyes and felt my heart drop inside of me. There were two of them. I slowly turned my head and looked desperately over to the other creature. Its hatred of me and wanting to tear my flesh from my bones was prevalent in its eyes.

I took several deep breaths and prepared to fight the vicious animals. There was no way I would let them kill me without a fight. I may not be the most skilled or even remotely experienced in this field, but I would not go down without a fight.

The first wolf started walking towards me, eyeing me carefully. I let out a terrifying growl and snarled at it to stay away. The wolf started gaining speed and leapt towards my neck. I managed to swipe my claws at it just before the vicious beast reached me, resulting in four deep gashes running down the animal's side. The wolf gave a quick wail and limped slightly, but gradually fell back into a fighting stance.

_Ok Hiccup, you can do this. Just use the claws, that's the only thing that we know how to use. _Suddenly both of the wolves started running towards me. As soon as the first one came into range I lashed my claws at him and threw him on the ground below me, a deep gash ripping through its chest and spilling blood onto the ground from the wound. _Great, just one more to go!._

The second wolf leapt onto my back and started tearing his claws into my hide. I let out a roar in pain as the animal ripped into my side. I threw my front legs forward, forcing the beast off of me and into

the side of a tree. The wolf yelped at impact and slowly got up from the ground. The wound on its side was bleeding profusely from when I hit it earlier. The wolf gave a few rapid breaths and eyed me angrily. It knew that it couldn't win this fight, it had no chance. The animal shook its head and gave one more vicious growl before limping away in the opposite direction of me.

I gave a long sigh of relief that the animals were finally dealt with. I limped down the hill and away from the carcass that lay near the bola. I looked down my chest and saw the blood oozing out of my scales. A moan of pain and agony escaped my throat as I continued down the hill. Once I was away from the dead body of the wolf, I lay back down and curled back into a tight ball of a Night Fury.

My ears seemed to be twitching sporadically and I could feel my chest pulsating slightly. It must have been something to do with the gashes on my body. I tried to ignore the odd vibrations coming from myself and I rested my head down on my paws.

_Is this what it's like to be a dragon; having every living soul trying to kill you and eat your flesh? _I settled back down and clenched my eyes closed once again as tears started to roll down my cheek. _Is this the life I'm going to have to live now?_

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I stared up at the sheer cliff before me looking for a plausible way out. _I am such an idiot! _I blasted a plasma bolt at the Cliff side and roared in anger to skies_. If I make enough of a racket, someone is bound to find me here in this hole._

I couldn't believe myself. How could I have let myself be so ignorant and oblivious that I wouldn't think of a way to get out of the cove? I shook my head and once again launched myself at the cliff side, furiously flapping my wings for all they were worth.

The inevitable happened.

I flew for a mere few feet then lost balance and crashed into the wall, which led me to crash into the ground shortly after. My body groaned in pain as I attempted to roll over onto my side.

The sun was nearly set when I decided to give up on throwing my body against the stone face. I figured that I had endured enough pain and accumulated enough scars for one session. I was sure to receive plenty more the following day.

I slumped down on the ground and listened to nature take its course. The birds letting out their last chirps before they go on to sleep, the water rustling gently within the cove that I lay, the wolf giving a terrifying howl to the wind as it signaled that it found its prey. Maybe the wolf had found me and was going to attempt an attack against a Dark Sentry.

I wouldn't be that lucky.

Wolves were some of my favorite meals when the fish supply had run down. It always made my day when they would come to attack the mighty Dark Sentry. The more the merrier. I could take out an entire pack if I needed to. Not many knew the true power that my species contained. One smooth swipe of my claw could rip a wolf into shreds.

I heard the tell-tale sound of one of the beasts being slammed into something and giving out a wail of pain. I smirked and rolled my eyes. Looks like someone got to it first.

Wolves were fairly tough creatures; it had to be something with brute strength or something very skilled with combat. Suddenly I heard the roar of a dragon. I quickly raised my head and listened intently as my eyes went to mere slits. That wasn't just any dragon roar, it was another Dark Sentry.

I knew that roar of pain. Even being on the top of the food chain, you would still manage to get in fights that were nearly impossible to prevail. My ear plates twitched sporadically to listen for any new sounds from the beast. One final yelp came to me. It wasn't the dragon though; it must have killed the wolf, or at the least, severely injured it.

I stood in shock of hearing the roar of the Dark Sentry. It had to be one, I just knew it. This could solve my problems for good. I could get that dragon to help me with my useless tailfin.

I sent out my call to get the dragon's attention. I repeated the call for help several times over to get a response, but I felt nothing come back to me. What's wrong with this Sentry? Was he killed by one measly wolf? I shook my head and repeated the call; he had to hear it. I knew I had to be doing it correctly. It was how all the other dragons communicated between their species.

I waited patiently for seemingly hours for a response, but it never came. I couldn't believe it. Either the dragon was killed, or they are so arrogant that they completely ignore a deliberate call for help.

Nothing ever came.

I gave a long sigh and curled back into a ball on the cove floor. I was doomed to stay on this dejected island for the rest of my life. At least at this rate the wait would be short.

I brought my head up and blew a stream of plasma onto the ground before me. I knew it was going to be a cool night. Dragons have plenty of fire within their bodies, but a cool night without any warmth from the outside would make any dragon miserable. There was nothing worse than having a raging fire on the inside, only to be freezing on the outside. The temperature differences could send the dragon's body into shock and eventually take their life if not taken care of.

It was one of the first things a dragon had to learn when they were hatchlings, breath fire. It not only acts as a weapon, but serves as a lifeline when given the toughest circumstances. For a Dark Sentry, it's even harder; our fire comes from a different place within our bodies and is harder to focus on, but it is also what gives us the

most powerful of all dragon fire.

It didn't take me long to find out how to use my fire after I had hatched. I probably only suffered through one or two nights without the aid. I was fortunate to be born in the hottest time of year and towards the south of this wretched place. I wouldn't want to have to go without my fire on a night like tonight; I would surely go into a state of shock.

I brought my wing around my body to help hold in the heat from my fire. I couldn't stop thinking of that other dragon. _What was it thinking?_ Was that what all other Dark Sentries acted like? When a brother is in need of help, do we just leave him to die?

I have never seen another dragon be so cruel and uncaring. Maybe that is why I never met my mother or father; maybe that is why I have never seen another one of my species.

We were cruel and heartless creatures, but _I_ wasn't, was I?

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I didn't sleep a wink through the night. The cold from outside kept me awake the entire time. I shivered relentlessly; I couldn't stop my body from constantly shaking. I knew that it was trying to warm my outer layer of skin, uh, scales, but it was more violent than anything I had ever experienced.

My eyes were drooping and my movement was sluggish. My body was in pain from not only the cold, but the gashes on my stomach were still pulsing in pain.

I slowly got to my feet and continued down the hill at which I chose to rest for the night. I trudged through the forest and made my way through several overgrown bushes and over fallen trees. All the Vikings ever did was resent me, as if I never should have been born. I'd tried so hard to become friends with the others in the village, but they just ran away like I had some contagious disease.

The only friend I ever had growing up was Fishlegs; he would probably be the only one who wouldn't try and kill me like this now. We enjoyed hanging out together when we were young and when none of the teenagers were focused on killing dragons, but when the other kids started harassing me and making fun of me for screwing up, he wouldn't be seen with me anymore.

The only other friend I had growing up was mom. She was always willing to play with me when there was no one else to. She would play my favorite games of hide-and-seek and keep away, but she would always make sure I won.

Dad never bothered to play games, he was always too busy. After mom died, I would go and ask him to play with me, but I always got the same answer: 'Maybe later son'. After a few more years the answer changed into, 'I'm too busy right now,' then into, 'Shouldn't you be focused on other more important things Hiccup?'.

I shook myself violently from the severe temperature difference within my body. It was so strange, my insides felt like a fire pit, but everything on the outside was as cold as ice. The cold almost seemed to be getting worse; I had to find someplace to warm myself up, and quick.

My eyes started to well up with tears as I crept underneath a large tree and into a crevice of the rock wall. Once through the crevice I stared in awe of the beautiful sight before me. It was a magnificent cove with a large pond on the side. I thought back to moments when I would go swimming in the ponds scattered across Berk. It was a joyous activity that would rush away any bad or hurtful memories.

I looked around the cove floor and saw that it appeared uninhabited. I slowly made my way over to the edge of the rock ledge and peered over the rim. It was a pretty steep drop and I didn't think that jumping down would be my best course of action.

Nature made my decision for me.

I slipped on the rocks and started tumbling down the hillside. I screeched in terror and fear as the floor of the cove came faster and faster. Suddenly, just before I hit the ground a black blur slammed into me and pushed me across the floor of the cove, preventing the inevitable injuries I would have gained.

I groaned in pain and squeezed my eyes shut in the pain now in my side. "Ohhhâ€¦Did it have to hit me so hard?" I was talking to myself rather than to whatever had hit me.

|| If I didn't hit you than you would have broken your neck with that kind of fall. ||

I shot open my eyes to see who the being was that spoke. I nervously scanned my surroundings and came across a black dragon heaving slightly to my left.

"Night Fury."

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I shook my head from the abrupt hit that I had placed on the other dragon. He was frantically looking around until his eyes came to rest upon me. I was about to ask for a thanks from him, but then he spoke. "Night Fury."

It was only then did I notice that he also was a Dark Sentry; right before my very eyes, another Dark Sentry. I've gone my whole life without seeing another one of my species and now, the perfect timing, a Dark Sentry. It must have been the one that was making the commotion last night. _But what did he just call me?_

I shook my head once more in confusion. || What did you just call me?
||

The dragon shuffled to his feet only to fall once more. What was wrong with this dragon? Had he been scared of me for some reason? What were those marks across his body?

He backed away as fast as his legs would allow him to and clumsily fell back onto the dirt. "Please, don't hurt me! I didn't mean to intrude on your home."

There was something wrong with this dragon, I could almost smell it; come to think of it, I could smell it. He had the same stench that the mortals had. He reeked of their village; was he a prisoner of theirs?

I slowly made my way over to him and glared down at him. || What did you just call me? ||

He slowly uncovered one of his eyes to look up at me as his body was shaking violently. "N-Night Fury?"

I didn't even comprehend what the Sentry had said; all I could do was stare at his eye. I knew that eye; I knew exactly who had that eye. I had only seen one other being in the world to have the same shade of eye as me.

The mortal.

It all started adding up in my head, the rather clumsy dragon, the fear of my presence, the eyes, and the thought of being called a 'Night Fury'. It was him, it had to be.

|| You're the mortal that I had killed aren't you? ||

He looked up at me trying to make himself look smaller, despite being noticeably smaller than me already. "Well, I'm not sure if you really killed me or not."

I roared into his face with a deafening tone. He dared to mock me when I could have so easily extinguished him; I would make sure he was dead this time. He threw paws back over his head and cowered in fear from me. "Please! I'm sorry! I didn't mean to hurt you. I just want to be a human again."

Tears were flowing from beneath his paws and landing on the ground below him. I rolled my eyes at the pathetic creature. I gave a huff and escorted myself to the other side of the cove to let him cry alone. As I walked away, I could hear his monotone going on and on. "I just want to be a human. I just want to be a human. I just want to be a human."

Human.

Was that what these inferior creatures called themselves? Was that what they thought themselves to be? Human? That would imply that what they did to my species was humane; I would think not.

I laid down far enough away from the dragon so that I wouldn't have to listen to his constant rambling. I glared over to him and pondered what to do with his worthless body.

Speaking of his body, why was he shaking so much? Ever since he

landed he had been shivering and shaking. I studied his movement for a moment longer until it hit me.

The cold.

He didn't make a fire last night to keep himself warm. He must have been freezing from the temperature difference in his body. It seemed that nature was going to make my decision for me. I wouldn't have to do anything. The dragon would soon go into shock and his body would give up soon after. I wouldn't have to lift a claw.

I watched the mortal-dragon continuously shake dramatically until I closed my eyes being contempt. I laid in peace as I waited for the dragon to fall into complete silence.

If only.

I heard some movement just to the front of me and I snapped my eyes open. There he was standing in front of me shivering fiercely and tears streaming down his face to land on the ground. I let out a low growl and glared at him angrily. || What do you want mortal? ||

The dragon lowered his head and took a few steps backwards.
"P-Please. I-I'm so c-cold and t-tired, can you h-help me?
P-Please?"

Never have I seen a dragon beg for sympathy from an opponent. He was clearly miserable; he wouldn't last through the day if he wasn't warmed up quickly. || Why should _I _help you? ||

He looked up at me almost shocked to see me not jumping up to save him. "P-Please, I don't w-want to die!" His legs chose then to give out from the blood not circulating properly. He let out a wail in pain as more tears began to flow down his cheek. "I-I'll leave. I'll leave as soon as I c-can. Please, j-just help me."

I don't know what possessed me while watching the dragon before me struggle in pain. Maybe it was the thought of seeing a fellow Dark Sentry dying with his only possible hope of survival being me. Maybe it was the thought that no one deserved to die from being frozen from shock. Whatever the reason was, I blew a blast of fire straight at the ground in front of the dragon and shook my head at him in disgrace. He looked up at me in horror as if I was about to kill him. || Curl yourself around it. If you want to live, then that is your only hope. ||

I walked a few more feet away from the Sentry and laid my eyes across his body once again. He slowly wrapped his tail around the heat source and glanced back over to me. He could no longer speak. He stared over at me wide-eyed and I could have sworn I heard him say thank you through my thoughts.

I rolled my eyes and rested my head back down onto my paws. I never thought I would help a dying mortal, especially one that tried to kill me. What was the world coming to?

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><p>AN: What did you all think? Was it what you were expecting? Was it worth the read? I really appreciate all the reviews and FavoriteFollows. It the reason I continue writing.

Big Thanks to the beta readers and the viewers!

3. Chapter 3: The Impossible

AN: We are back! I am pretty happy with this chapter.

I give you:

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><p>A Fury's Tribulation<p>

The Impossible

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><p>The world around us never ceases to amaze me. There are so many unexplained things that occur around us that seem impossible or even incomprehensible. I've seen my fair share of the unexplained: a dragon that can use nothing but its mind to control nearly a whole species, and a species of 'humans' that will insist on rebuilding their home week after week instead of simply moving away, and thus the things I've seen what seems impossible with each and every dragon.<p>

There have always been dragons out there that seem to do the inconceivable. There are dragons that use their skin to blend in perfectly with their surroundings; there are dragons that tunnel through the earth with dozens of rows of serrated teeth. There is even a kind of dragon that can ride the lightning as it strikes down to the ground. I would have thought that I would have seen it all by now in my life.

Would have.

Even after seeing all that I have throughout my lifetime, I never thought I would have come across _this. _The _this _that I'm talking about, is a dragon. This isn't just any dragon though, for he has done the impossible, and he has done what no living being has ever done before. He has taken on the body of what he believes to be a 'Night Fury'.

I've survived my life up until now to never witness another one of my species. Every time I would come across a dragon that is unbeknownst to me, he would have no idea who or what I was. Now, after the strangest encounter with a mortal, he has taken my form.

I was still staring over at the dragon who was still shivering beyond what I thought was possible. His eyes were clenched tightly and his body was coiled into a compact ball centered around a warmed spot on the ground beneath him.

The dragon hasn't moved an inch since he curled around that ball of fire I blew on the ground for him, other than the obvious shivering of course. I still had my eyes fixed upon him as thin slits. He truly

baffled me. I couldn't stop questioning how and why he was here. What caused this to happen to him? What did I do to him to cause him to take my form? What happened inside of his body to transform it into the body of a Dark Sentry?

My eyes scanned over his thin figure. His small body nearly imitated my very own with only subtle differences, as if the transformation didn't fully take effect. The only differences between him and me were that his body was slightly smaller and thinner than mine, and he had several acid green marks sporadically imprinted across his scales. This was something that puzzled me dearly. Why would he have those marks but not me? The scars' color was the same as his eyes, but I had the same exact color as him. Why would I not have those marks?

There were many things that didn't make sense, such as why he was here curled around my ball of fire. The biggest question I had, though, was how. How did he manage to survive the fatal blast of plasma that I poured onto his body? How did that attack force his body to accept the plasma and take it over as a new form?

It had been several hours since my encounter with the Sentry. I just couldn't take my eyes off of him. His body was starting twitch and shiver more sporadically. My fire was no longer a suitable heat source. I could tell that he was beginning to become more and more afraid. He was scared that the heat would no longer be enough for him; he was scared that he was going to lose his life even though I had helped him.

I racked my brain on what to do with him. I couldn't decide on whether to let him die, or help him again. I couldn't trust the mortal; for all I knew, he could have killed dozens of my fellow species. He was the one that shot me down and nearly killed me!

But he didn't.

He didn't stab his weapon into my scales. He didn't tear out my heart and take it to his father. He couldn't do it. Maybe this was why I couldn't let him die right here in front of me. Now, he was the one at my mercy, I was the one to choose whether he gets to live or die. _I _had to make the decision.

I couldn't stop think of the consequences of if I were to let him live. _What if I heal him and he returns with his tribe only to kill me? What if he learns too much and kills me himself? _Right now, I had the upper paw, and I need to use it wisely.

My mind kept drifting back to my tail. I knew that if I were to teach him to use his fire correctly, he could heal my tail, but if I taught him and he used it against me and started killing other dragonsâ€|. I couldn't have that hang on my shoulders, even if it meant that I died anyway.

The other dragons were too important to me for me to let one mortal in a Sentry's form go on a rampage. I didn't want to die though.

Damn it! Why do all the decisions have to be made by me?! I didn't ask for this role!

I shook my head in rage and let out a snort of annoyance accompanied by a menacing growl. The other Sentry noticed my anger and peered over, completely exhausted. He was worn out past his limits; he wouldn't even be able to stand on his paws if his life depended on it. His jaw was trembling as he let out a moan of pain and sorrow.

His pitiful look was starting to drive my anger even further. _Was he this pathetic as a mortal? _It bothered me on why did try to kill me back on the hill. If he had stabbed me even one time, I would have a completely valid excuse to leaves him to die, but no, he didn't. I couldn't hold in the question any longer. His eyes were still staring over at me, clearly distraught and worried. I had to find out why.

|| Why didn't you kill me back there? ||

He clenched his eyes once more and slowly opened them to see me again. He sounded as if every ounce of energy had been spent from his body. "W-What?" He was still shaking, but his movements were slowing; his body was giving up. It was now or never.

I let out a long sigh trying to overlook his inability to listen. || Why did you not just kill me back there? Why didn't you do as you said you were going and cut out my heart? ||

The dragon let out a shaky breath. He knew that this question was going to arise at some point. He knew he would have to answer for his reasoning. "I-I couldn't."

I let out a vicious growl and got to my feet. I paced over to his limp body and glared into his eyes. || That's a lie and you know it! You better tell me the truth or I will make sure you don't live to see another day! Now tell me, why didn't you kill me? ||

The Sentry let out a pained moan and looked back up at me with desperate eyes. "Y-you looked as frightened!..as I was." He closed his eyes and let out a deep breath. The loss of energy was taking its toll. He was now either going to die, or have to be drastically warmed up, and quickly. A final tear ran down his face as he took a few shaky breaths. "I'm sorry."

I couldn't understand this mortal anymore. He was practically killed by a dragon, he was attacked by a wolf, taken the edge of life and death by the freezing cold, and now he was apologizing to the one who wanted him dead in the first place. He was truly desperate for my help and was going to take any chance to survive.

Something I would do.

I scanned the dragon's body and let out a huff. _I did this. _I walked next to the dragon so I could lie down next to him. _Am I about to save this mortal?_

Yes, yes I was.

I blew one more blast of fire in the center of the other dragon's coil and lay down against his freezing side. His body tensed slightly as he felt my presence. I took my wing and wrapped it around the rest of his body.

Of all things to happen, I ended up saving a mortal, one who would most likely kill me later. I couldn't believe what had come over me. I, of all dragons, was saving a mortals life.

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I let out a shaky breath as I woke from my slumber. My body was still so intensely cold, but was finally starting to warm up. I could feel something wrapped around my body and I started to open my eyes and look around.

To my pleasant surprise, the Night Fury was lying right next to me with his wing wrapped around my body to help insulate me from the cold. I looked over at his head which was lying peacefully on the ground. His eyes shot open and he was starring right at me. I jolted back against his wing.

|| Don't. The more you move around, the more the cool air you will let penetrate your scales. You need to stay under my wing until your body can withstand the outside temperature. ||

I looked warily back at him and lowered myself back down to the ground next to him. I pulled my tail tightly around the Night Fury's blast of fire to help keep my body warm. I felt bad that the dragon had to baby-sit me to stay alive. _Gods, can't I do anything right, like ever? _I let out a long sigh in which the Night Fury shifted slightly around me.

|| What now? Are you uncomfortable with me next to you or something?!
|| His tone was harsh and insensitive. || Because believe me, I don't want to be here just as much as you. ||

I felt my heart drop slightly at the thought of him leaving. "No, please. I'm sorryâ€¦I-I just can't believe you're helping me."

I felt his breath on the back of my neck. I was so nervous to actually be relying on a dragon. At any time, he could just get up and walk away without a second thought. I would be dead within the hour. || Well neither can Iâ€¦Which leads me to my conditions.
||

My ears perked up at the statement. "What conditions?"

He paused for a moment; I could feel him staring at the back of my head.

|| I'm not going to just let you live only for you to try and kill me later-||

"But I would never do-"

|| Don't interrupt me! || There was absolute silence as I waited to hear him out. || Like I was sayingâ€¦I'm not going to save you only to have you kill me in the end. If you don't comply with what I have you do, then I'm going to get up right now and leave you here to die.

||

My heart was pounding from the thought of him leaving me. I would do anything for him to stay at my side, but what was he going to have me do? "What are the conditions?"

The dragon behind me sighed and let out a deep breath. || First: you will harm neither me nor any other dragon that you come across. Ever! || I jolted slightly but nodded firmly knowing he was staring right at me. || Second: you will leave this cove as soon as you are able, and I never want to see your face again. ||

My heart dropped to the pit of my stomach. _Where was I to go? What would happen to me if the Vikings found me? Who could change me back in to a human? _I dropped my head to the ground and felt a tear trickle down my face.

|| Do you agree? || I clenched my eyes shut and tried not to make it obvious that I was crying. I had no family out in the wilderness. I had no one to help me when I was hurt or in pain. I had no one to help keep me warm. I wouldn't survive alone. "Why don't you just kill me now then?" I sniffed as another tear streamed down my face.

The Night Fury quickly got to his feet and paced around to look me in the eye. I wasn't going to look back. If he made me leave, then he was effectively killing me anyways.

|| You _want_ me to kill you?! ||

I took my paw and wrapped it over my head to cover my eyes. "If you forced me to leave then I will be dead anyway."

He said nothing. It seemed he was shocked that I would rather him kill me than to try and live in the woods. My body started shivering again from the Night Fury no longer being at my side. "I can't survive without you helping me just from the cold! How do you think I would do against an attack?"

I took my paw back and stared coldly back up at him. He was looking down at my feet, but seemed to be thinking deeply on the subject. "Can you just change me back to a human please? I will leave immediately."

What I heard next was the last nail in my coffin.

|| I can't change you back. || I looked up at him completely shocked.

"B-But you changed me into this. You have to be able to change me back! If I stay a dragon, I'll _never_ see my family again!"

He shook his head at me and sighed. || I have no idea how you became a dragon. All I know is that I tried to kill you and then you came back to me. || He gestured to me with his paw. || Like this. ||

I lowered my eyes and stared at the dirt before me. Another tear ran down my face. So that was it. All he did was try to kill me, and now I was a Night Fury. I could never go back to my village, I could never get married, and I could never have kids. Life, for me, was over. I spoke up just loud enough for him to hear me. "Well, you

might as well finish the job then." I closed my eyes and waited for death to come, but the sounds that were audible were the growls reverberating from the Night Fury.

|| What are you talking about? You're just giving up. You're just going to let yourself die! || I open my eyes and glared back up at him. "What do you expect me to do? I'm a freaking dragon! I no longer have a life. I no longer have a family. I no longer have a place to live or have any of the necessary skills to be a dragonâ€¦. I'm not like you! I can't just get up and go back to my family or flock or whatever you call it."

The Night Fury brought his tail around and smacked me across the face. || You think you've had it rough! You think you've had it hard! || He growled ferociously into my face looking ready to tear me to shreds. || That's how it's been my _whole _life! I never had a mother or father that cared if I lived or died! I have never even seen them!... I have gone my entire life without someone there for me to lean on. I had to raise myself and figure out how to survive alone! You think _you _have it hard! || He blasted a ball of plasma at the cliff side which caused several rocks to come tumbling down.

|| You have no idea what a hard life is. You have stepped into my place for one day, and now you want to just give up. You really are a disgrace. I hope that _all _the mortals aren't like you. ||

I looked down in shame. I never would have thought someone could have been brought up in such terrible conditions. I wouldn't have made it two days if my parents left me as I was born. I slowly looked back up to him. He was breathing heavily and glaring down at me. "I'm sorry. I had no idea."

He softened his expression and came back around to lie next to me. By now I was shivering violently again. || Yes, well no one ever does. People don't think about how someone else might have it harder than them. They only ever think that they have it worse than everyone elseâ€¦. I have probably had a harder life than most, but I will never try and make people feel sorry for me. I am proud of what I have accomplished over my lifetime. Little can say they have done what I have. ||

I swallowed any dignity that I had left before I spoke up again.

"You're rightâ€¦. I'm _not_ like the other Vikings. I did have a mother and a father, but my mom was killed about five years ago and my father chose to ignore me whenever I speak." I let out a long sigh as I realized I was opening up to the one that would most likely kill me. "I've never had any real friends and have always been the laughing stock of the tribeâ€¦.To be honest, I don't think that anyone in that village would have tried to save me like you did."

There was a pause while the Night Fury wrapped his wing back around my body. I gave a heartfelt croon and closed my eyes in contentment. || You mean that your own village would leave you out to die in the cold? ||

I nodded, sighing as I thought back to the people back in the village. I remembered how poorly Snotlout treated me. I remembered

how every time I rounded a corner I was greeted with disapproving faces and scowls. I remembered how not one of them cared if I lived or died.

"They would probably encourage it."

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We laid there for hours until the sun finally set and the cold was beginning to come in again. The Sentry's scales were still cold to the touch, but at least his shivering had stopped. Occasionally I would pull my wing back and blow a stream of plasma into the coil in which he was wrapped up in.

He was so different than any other dragon I had come across. While his upbringing was not quite as harsh as my very own, he did seem to have it harder than most. From what I could tell, he was an outcast of their village. No one ever wanted to deal with him or be around him. He was the only other dragon that I ever seemed to have anything in common with.

His body twitched as he seemed to awaken. I rolled my eyes, but I knew that he needed to get some rest. It was still hard for me to believe that I was taking pity on this dragon. I have never been one to even associate with other dragons, much less help one.

I looked up at the night sky with envy. It's true what they say; you never know what you had until it's gone. The sky tonight was perfectly clear, not a cloud in sight. These were my favorite of nights. I could fly across at great speeds and no one would even know I was there. My midnight black hide blended perfectly with the dark sky giving me perfect camouflage.

It was always so quiet on nights like tonight. Once, I would be in the air and being able to see for miles on end, it had been glorious.

But now, it was impossible.

My only hope would be to come across another Dark Sentry. I pushed the idea aside of using this particular dragon beside me. He wouldn't be able to endure the fire needed to regenerate my tailfin. That would be even if I could manage to train him to use his fire correctly.

It all led back to whether I could trust him though. It would be a risk just teaching him to walk properly. Teaching him to fly or to breathe his fireâ€¦It could end badly. I looked back down from the night sky to the Sentry lying next to me. He had his head turned and was staring right at me.

|| It's rude to stare you know. || He quickly looked to the ground below and I smirked.

"Sorry, you were looking at the skyâ€¦ You wish you were flying don't you?" I scoffed at the insinuation. || What made you think

that? || He pawed the ground nervously just under his head. "You just looked like you were longing to be thereâ€|.You can go."

I shook my head in response trying to understand what he just said.
|| What? ||

He looked back up to me somewhat reluctantly. "You can go. I know that is where you want to be, and I can survive without you for a few hours if that is what you want."

He really had no idea. It figured; the mortals were completely oblivious to what they did to our kind. They thought they could simply shoot down any random dragon and we could still fly away completely unscathed. I snorted and glared down at him. || Is this a joke or do you really not know? ||

He shrank down onto his paws even more than I thought possible.
"What? No. I just thought that you wouldâ€|"

|| I can't fly damn it! ||

His face went from cowering to confusion. "What? But you were flying when I shot you down. Why could youâ€|.Oww!" I slapped him on the side of his head to bring his attention to my freshly amputated tailfin. || _This_ is why I can no longer fly! _You_ shot me down and my tailfin was ripped clean offâ€|.. Without that tailfin, I can no longer get airborne. The most I will ever be able to do is take short glides. Because of you, it's now impossible for me to fly.||

The Sentry lay completely still and made no indication that he was going to respond. The only sounds were my heavy breathing and the cool breeze as it came by. The dragon beneath my wing was clearly in shock on what his careless weapon had done to me. He shrunk his head down as if I were going to thrash my claws at his throat. He continued to vibrate as the cool air managed to penetrate his dark scales. || Did you really think that your weapon would have no consequences? ||

The Sentry swallowed harshly as he prepared to speak; he was petrified as to what I would do to him for his deadly feat. "I had no idea that you would lose your flight, butâ€|." I glared down at the back of his head as he eyed the ground nervously.

|| But what? ||

He sighed and closed his eyes in shame. "We never thought of the consequences. We always thought that dragons were mindless beasts that did nothing but terrorize us and steal our food. We didn'tâ€|."

|| How could you think that we were mindless?! Every living creature has a mind of their own. It's not like we're just put on this world to ruin your lives. You and your village are not the center of the world! ||

The dragon huffed and turned his head so that he could speak to me face to face. "I know! Especially now that I've met you! It's just that we don't think about you guys having some kind of culture and lives. All that we knew was that you raided us week after week and we lost more and more lives every time." He shook his head and turned

back away from me so that he could lay his head on his paws comfortably. "Look, all I'm trying to say is that I'm sorry about your tail, but from what you were doing to our village, I don't think it was wrongfully intended."

My heart was beating furiously. How could he think that what he did was right? Taking away a dragons flight was essentially giving them death sentence. || So you think that just killing dragons is completely justifiable because we have taken food from your village. || The Sentry let out a long breath of agony. "You have killed hundreds of us!..."

|| And you have killed thousands of us! ||

"I know!"

His words echoed throughout my mind. If any other dragons were in the area, I'm sure they would be utterly confused by our strange argument. "I _still _think that what you have done to our village was unforgivable. Do you even realize what you and the other dragons have done to us?!" I saw a tear fall down the corner of his eye just before he turned slightly to stay out of view. "You said that you never had a family to grow up with, and I'm sure that was awful, but do you understand how devastating it is to lose someone that was your only friend and your companion?"

His question puzzled me dearly. He was right, while I never had a family while growing up; I also never became close to someone and never truly loved anyone. _Had he lost someone that was dear to him?_

The dragon lowered his head back down onto his paws as another tear ran down his face. "I doubt you would remember, but five years ago, probably the first time you came to Berk, you fired on us. That blast that you directed to the main tower, it killed my mother."

Damn it.

Silence surrounded us as if we had fallen into the deep abyss of the sea. I _did _remember that night, how could I have not? It was my first invasion being a part of this drove. It was the first time I had gone out on a feeding run for the Empress.

Thinking back, it almost seemed right what the Empress was having everyone do. She was still in her early stages of mind controlling. She had the ability to sway ones opinion, but she didn't use it threateningly like she would do today. She would simply ask for us to bring her some food as she didn't want to retreat from the Isle. Her voice was soft and caressing to ears. We had no issues with helping her in her predicament.

If only we could have seen what she would have become.

The soothing tone that she used to simply inquire and request with had been completely done away with. Now, it consists of threats and terrorization that if food isn't returned, the dragons become her meal.

I remembered her final statement she made just as we had left the Isle on that day. 'Make me proud, Dark Sentry'. While I knew very

well that I was a part of the species, she was the first to ever vocalize it to me. To be a Dark Sentry, one had to be very intelligent and capable. They had to be a divine leader that could be depended upon when needed most.

I am the epitome of a Dark Sentry.

When she named me a 'true' Dark Sentry that night, I knew that I had to live up to the name. I had to do something memorable, I had to do something unforgettable, and that was just what I did.

I came down in that impressive dive and built my fire within my gaseous stomach. I had intentionally added as much plasma to the fire as possible to ensure maximum destruction. The infamous whistle sounded my attack and the mortals did nothing but stand in confusion and perplexity. I cast the bright blast onto the main tower and destroyed the structure into nothing but bits and shards. The blast was so powerful that it knocked the mortal from their feet just from the concussion of the impact.

I was proud.

But apparently the shivering dragon that was beneath my wing wasn't the only one who didn't think of the consequences. I guess that I would most likely be upset if someone were to kill on a person that was beloved to me, and get away with it. I never once thought that my actions would cause so much pain and hurt for years to come, but fate has a funny way of introducing those who never would have intended on meeting the other. I never would have thought that I would come across a lanky teenage mortal that suddenly transformed into a Dark Sentry. I had a feeling the dragon sitting underneath my wing never intended on being thrown into a completely different body and lifestyle. We were both in for a surprise when fate had us come together.

The aforementioned dragon turned his head to be in view of me. Tear tracks were glistening on his cheek. He shivered as the cold was rushing around his body. "Do you still think I'm the only one who doesn't think of the consequences?" I did nothing but stare into those luminous acidic eyes of the 'Night Fury'. We both had regrets in our lives, but we both knew that living in the past was not going to get us anywhere.

It was time to change the impossible.

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I awaited a response for what seemed like ages. The Night Fury continued to stare at me. _Maybe what I said had an effect on him. _I wished that none of this would have happened, if only I had been a few seconds later when firing that bola, if only I had been aiming just a little bit higherâ€|

But noâ€|

Vikings are always talking about how each and every one of us has a

destiny. I never really thought about it too much. It wasn't that I didn't believe them; it was that I _couldn't_ believe them. How could the gods allow someone to have such a terrible and unfortunate life such as mine, or as I have just found out, the Night Fury's.

Each and every day of my life I would wake up and ponder whether or not to go outside. I would fear of what lurked on the other side of that door leading to the outside world from my safe and secluded home. It was a usual occurrence to come outside and be beaten over the head by my obnoxious cousin or be tormented every waking moment by the ruthless antics of the twins. I would huddle in the corner of my room until my father would burst through the door demanding that I make a showing of myself to the outside public.

Unfortunately, as soon as my father would turn his shoulder or step out of earshot, my life would turn from bad to worse. It was as if the other teenagers saved up all their anger towards me over time and released all of their hatred in one swift motion. The bruises I would carry seemed to never go away. My only hope was to make it to the forge and hide away until once again, I would be thrown out to 'show myself to the outside world'.

Needless to say, I wasn't particularly fond of the whole 'destiny' idea. Unless my life was considered not worthy of having a future or perhaps I was living on borrowed time, I couldn't fathom how one's life could get any worse.

That is, until now.

_How could someone be expected to be born into a harsh and cruel world with nothing and no one to guide them? How a father and a mother could leave their newly born son, err, dragon, to grow up on their own? _I didn't understand the concept that dragons had. _Was it to make them stronger? Was it to teach them to always fend for themselves?_

The dragon culture made no sense to me. I had been a Night Fury for a whopping total of one day, and have nearly diedâ€¦_Twice!_ A dragon being born into the world with no help whatsoever, would have virtually no chance of survival. The fact that the Night Fury lying next to me with his wing covering my body, was a miracle in itself.

It was a miracle that he had survived alone for all of his life. It was a miracle that I somehow survived the fiery blast of plasma he had rained across my body. It was a miracle that even though _I _was the one to shoot him down and completely obliterated his chance of flying, he was willing to let me live.

To anyone else, it would seem impossible.

To me, after what seemed like an endless stream of impossible events, it seemed like destiny. _Maybe I was meant to shoot him down. Maybe I was meant to come across his bound body. Maybe I was __**destined**__ to free him._

But now, I had nothing. Even if this Night Fury was willing to let me stay with him, I had nowhere to run, I had nowhere to hide. I was sure that my life would be over within a week's time, or I would suddenly jerk awake and realize that this was all some crazy

dream.

I gave a sudden shiver that pulsed throughout my body and the Night Fury gave me a curious stare as looked desperately into his acid eyes. I was still so cold. The only light reflecting on us now was that of the moon. The dragon beside me closed his eyes and sighed as if he had just come to a conclusion within his mind. I started to get nervous as he opened his eyes to slits.

I could help but fear whatever he was going to do next. He had the power to take me out with little effort. He could use his claws to slash at my hide just one time and I would be nothing but a lifeless body in a pool of blood. He could so easily take my life and feed on my insides.

I started to shrink down closer to the ground as he reached his head over my body and pulled back his wing slightly. _Please don't kill me. Please don't kill me._

And he didn't.

The Night Fury simply breathed in a lungful of air and sprayed down a pool of plasma fire just in front of my body. Once again, all he was doing was trying to help me. He leaned back down to where he was originally and I looked back over to him still shaking slightly.

|| I'm not one to socialize with others. || I cocked my head to the side and scrunched my nose slightly. His statement only further cemented my theory about how much of a miracle the situation was. He let out a long breath and turned his towards the pond that was shimmering to the reflection of the moonlight. || Ever since I found out that I was to raise myself and do things on my own, I became a secluded dragon. I never tried to reach out to anyone, I never tried to become close to another dragon. I could only think of the betrayal that I feared. ||

He was right; I had the same fear that he had, though mine was fear of losing more than I had already lost. I had the fear that if I got close to someone as I had to my mother, I would lose them as well.

|| The only contact I made was short conversations with other dragons. If I ever got close to someone to only have them be taken away or killed in an invasion, it would be a devastation that my heart has never felt. The only love for another dragon has been for my parents, but the betrayal of them leaving me at birth was something I never could forget. ||

I hated how much the world could make one's life so miraculous, but leave others to wither in pain and agony. The two of us had so much in common, we had so many similarities, but the one trait that we both shared that we wish we didn't was fear of loss.

We both had ways of dealing with our problems, and he was dealing with his as I assumed he always had, by getting rid of them. He tried to eliminate me after I freed him from the bola, he tried to ignore me when was freezing to death, and now he was trying to force me to leave as soon as I was able. My only problem, I had no solutions. It would be impossible for me to survive out in the wilderness alone. I would have virtually no chance of survival.

And maybe that was what he was teaching me.

Even in the worst possible situation with seemingly no outcome and no possible living result, one can _still _succeed. Maybe this was true, and maybe I just had to find the only possible outcome for my situation. Maybe I had to find the one solution that could keep me alive and well.

The only path that seemed to have any light at the end of the tunnel though, was through him. I knew that I had to convince this dragon to help me; I knew that I needed him in order to survive. I knew that without him, I would end up being the first Night Fury to be slain by the hands of a Viking.

The only thing that was telling me that I needed him though was that somehow, deep inside, I knew that he needed me as well. He needed me to do the impossible.

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><p>AN: So, officially my longest chapter that I have ever written. Hopefully there are still some people out there that have made it to this point without giving up. For those of you who stuck with it:<p>

What did you think? I enjoyed this chapter very much. It seemed to go more in depth as to what the two were thinking and expanded upon their decisions. I hope that you thought the chapter was worth the read. The next chapter will include the village of Berk and more of these two 'debating'.

If you thought this was great, please remember to review, favorite and follow. It is because of these that my stories continue.

Also, from now on I will be updating my profile regularly to let my readers know when to expect upcoming chapters for both this as well as 'Truth and Reconciliation'. If this is something that you have been curious about, just visit my page and at the bottom you will see current updates that should inform you of when to expect the next chapter.

Thank you, and I really appreciate you taking your time to read through my stories.

4. Chapter 4: Conviction

AN: We are back, sorry about the delay.

I give you:

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><p>A Fury's Tribulation<p>

Conviction

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><p>Dragons can be the greatest of creatures and the worst of creatures. They can be the one to save your life when you have fought day and night to survive, or they can be a heartless wretch and watch you starve as your insides seep from your very flesh. A dragon will do just about anything for something or someone they care about.<p>

Anything.

I used to think that the Empress was a dragon that cared for the ones that helped her. I thought that she was one who would give gratitude to those who risked their lives to keep her alive and well. I used to think that she would help us when _we _were the ones incapable of flying or hunting. I used to think wrong.

The first time it happened she seemed to play it off as an accident; like she didn't mean to do it, and that it would never happen again. The second time threw the whole nest into frenzy and caused several members of the drove to abandon the island. They were never seen or heard from again. The calamity of the nest finally settled and the dragons started to listen to the Empress as she reasoned with them, or more likely brainwashed them.

I left the Isle that night. I couldn't put up with the ridiculous lies that she was putting past them. It was like I was the only one who thought it was a little bit weird that the Empress was suddenly leaping from the depths of Hell in which she settled and was eating the defenseless dragons who didn't bring back quite enough food. She started lecturing the others on how if they didn't start cooperating and doing as she desired, their precious fire would be depleted just as the few dragons that abandoned the Isle not too long before.

Of course, none of the other dragons knew for sure if she had taken the other dragons' fire or not. They just assumed that since they hadn't been seen or heard from, they must have either died or lost their fire, which would cause them to die off anyway.

It wasn't a good situation by any means. Dragons will be dragons, but when trying to instruct an entire horde of the mindless beasts, it almost becomes overwhelming. The constant reminder that the Empress can, without notice, take control of their weak minds and lure their helpless souls toward her undeniably wretchedness, always remains.

I've seen much of the bad that dragons can exhibit, but I've also seen much of the good. What I hadn't seen, well, up until now that is, is the good in mortals. The dragon lying underneath my wing has truly become a revolution for my eyes to see. He has lost everything from his previous life: his tribe, his friends, and his family. And it was all because of me. Despite me being a part of it, he has been desperately trying to gain my trust of him and wanted a simple truce. I can't say that I'm surprised that he would want a truce. I mean if one were to compare _the two of us, _the winner of a duel would be obvious. He doesn't have any of the required skills to even stay alive in the forest, let alone take on a fearsome Dark Sentry.

Which brings me back to my point, a dragon would do anything for the one he loves. Even while I have loathed this Sentry from the time I

came across his pathetic mortal form, he seems to have this magnetic pull on my emotions. Every time I would think about ripping the lungs from his acid splashed chest, his small form would somehow stop me. It was like I could see myself killing something that was relying so heavily on me. It was almost as if he were my pet. A living being that would obey every order and command that I would throw at it, but something that I have grown attached to in an unexplainable way. Even though he would just be a hindrance to my success, he would be my hindrance, and one that I could polish and train to follow in my own footsteps.

As if he was my very own hatchling.

It seemed so odd to me that, if I were to be attacked by wolves, the ideal thing to do would be to leave him as bait and make a run for myself. But now that he was under my care, my protection, I couldn't allow such a thing to happen.

Wouldn't.

And yet, I couldn't stop imagining the consequences of my actions towards the mutation of a Sentry. If I were to let my guard down for just one moment, just long enough for him to strike, my future would be vanquished.

It had kept me up through the night. Everything I was to do from here on out; it all depended on whether I left him for dead, or raised him as my own. The impossible had to be done, for it had already been done. There was no decent explanation as to how he managed to survive my plasma blast and miraculously change into what he thought of as a Night Fury. I just had to come up with some sort of plan in case he was to foil my own.

I never thought about raising a hatchling: it wasn't something that I ever desired, and it wasn't even tradition for a Dark Sentry to do so. I wasn't raised by my mother nor father, so then why should I even consider this mortal to fall in my footsteps?

I lifted my wing and scanned the sleeping body of the Sentry. His body had finally returned to a normal temperature and his breathing was smooth and consistent. I knew that he would be able to sustain himself now. Unfortunately, if I was to send him on his merry way, he would either get killed by a vicious predator or end up in the same position he was in when he arrived in my cove.

Mine.

The sun was finally edging its way over the horizon, or at least I assumed it was. I could only see the faint traces of light that was reflecting from above the cove walls. The dim light began to give me a clear view of the landscape that I was surrounded by.

I gradually lifted myself up off the ground that I seemed to have spent too much of my time upon. I trudged over to the edge of the pond and waited for my morning meal to appear. As I patiently hovered over the edge of the still water, I thought back to my predicament. What could I have done to train this dragon while securing my safety? What did I have to do to this Sentry to cause him to respect and honor my wishes? Seemingly just as an idea popped into my head, a fish swam just beneath my snout.

Delicious.

I didn't mind having to hunt for my food; it kept my senses smart and honed my agility. As I savored the taste of the Icelandic cod, a figure appeared by my side. I threw my body around and growled fiercely at the fish-stealing predator, or at least what I had assumed it to be. The obsidian dragon quickly took a few steps back and got as close to the ground as his body would allow.

"I'm sorry; I didn't mean to startle you. I was just going to watch."

Watch? What would he want to watch for? Was he trying to study my weaknesses for when he planned to attack? Was he planning an assassination right under my nose?

I shook my head from the ridiculous thought. Who was I kidding? This dragon wouldn't have hurt a fly. I felt as if I wanted him to attack me. At least then I would have an excuse for leaving him to die.

|| What do you have to gain from me? Why do you insist on staying here, and why do you think I should teach you the principles of being a Sentry? ||

"A what?" The dragon cocked his head to the side showing the almost cuteness that we Sentries possessed.

I rolled my eyes and huffed. || A Night Fury. _|| What else would I have been talking about? Was he going to be this ignorant throughout the entire process? I took a deep breath, trying to prepare for the worst. I didn't want to give up on him within the first five minutes. I looked back up to him as he was pawing the ground nervously. He was lost in thought as he tried coming up with a decent answer.

I watched him for what seemed like ages. His slight movements and twitches just made the silence even more excruciating. I couldn't figure out what made this being so helpless. He just sat beside me as I was staring at him patiently. I could tell he was trying his best to say something notable, but his joyful expression was quickly fading. I watched as he closed his eyes and slumped down on his shoulders. For a brief moment a tear came sliding down the Sentry's cheek and plopped onto the ground. He quickly shot open his eyes and stared desperately into my very own.

"I don't know."

I didn't move or remove my gaze from his luminous eyes. Instead, I just continued to watch as he struggled to come up with an explanation. He knew that answer wouldn't have been good enough for me. He knew that he was going to have to come completely clean if he wanted any sort of chance of me helping him. He knew this just as well as I did.

"I don't know, but it's because I don't understand why you have helped me even this far. I'm sure that any other dragon would have just let me fall into the cove and leave me to die if the impact itself didn't kill me." He paused, breathing in an attempt to stall the inevitable outbreak of tears.

"I'm sorry. I've been nothing but a burden for you and I'm sure that you would have rather been away from here with some other dragons. I don't have an answer to your questions because I truly don't know why you would even consider letting me stay. I haven't ever mounted up to be anything and I've only been known as the village screw up. You should have seen their faces when I told them I shot down a Night Fury, or whatever you're called. It has truly astonished me that you have willingly kept me alive as long as you have, and while I greatly appreciate your efforts, I can understand your reasoning."

"You asked me why I wanted to stay with you. To be honest, I don't know. All I know is that if I go out in the woods alone, I would most likely die. I would die. For once in my life, I just want there to be someone to lean on for help. I just want the feeling of someone being there for me. I know that it's probably the last thing you want to do, but it's what I crave more than anything in the world, human or dragon." He paused for a moment to clench his eyes as drops of sorrow fell from his scales. "It's been so long since I've had someone to call a friend or family. I know that you have never had someone like that, but maybe that's the reason it hurts so much for meâ€¦ I have absolutely no idea why you would even consider using me as your apprentice, because truthfully, I wouldn't teach me."

So that was it, one would think that I would have killed him for not giving an appropriate answer. One would assume that I would have severed my ties with the mortal. One would suppose that I would leave him for dead like he should have been in the first place.

But they would be wrong.

For the dragon sitting before me had given exactly the answer I was searching for. There wasn't a dragon in all the lands that could have come up with a suitable answer, but he managed to say exactly what I was hoping for.

He was honest.

Any other dragon would have come up with some sorry excuse as they pleaded for mercy. They would have attempted to make themselves seem worthy of my time, but none of them would be. I had never before seen one to truly lose everything they held dear, but with this particular creature, I could honestly say that I had. He never had much in the way of family or friends, he never had a relationship that wasn't later crushed or obliterated, but then he truly lost his connection to the world he knew. He lost the one part of him that kept him sane.

I knew that he was completely desperate and he would do anything to just stay alive a little bit longer. It was then that I knew he could be trusted. He wouldn't go against my will and he wouldn't do something to harm me, for I was all he had left.

He lay down and rested his head on his paws. Apparently I had never told him why I saved his life the other day. I questioned my reasoning behind that as well, for any other dragon would have just let him fall. I was just too amazed that I finally got to see another-â€¦

|| Dark Sentry. || I hardly realized that I whispered the words out loud.

He looked back up to me and let out a long sigh. "What was that?"

I sighed and looked back over to the pond. || The species is called a Dark Sentry. They are the ones who scan and observe as the battles take place. They're the ones who lead from above while only intervening when absolutely necessary. _We _are Dark Sentries.
||

We.

He looked down as if in shame or self-disappointed. "I'm not a Dark Sentry. I'm not a dragon; I'm not even a Viking. I'm just the first one to stumble across your body and was the only one stupid enough to try and set you free."

I watched him as he thought about his life helplessly. It wasn't something that I was familiar with, but I could understand the pain he was in. He just lost everything of value to him and now he was practically begging his enemy for his life, and it was up to me to give it to him.

I scanned his body once more as the sun was giving me a better view than that of the moonlight. His slender body looked starved and mistreated. He still reeked of that dreaded mortal stench and the acid green streaks seemed to almost be fading away as he was becoming more and more depressed. The wings that were awkwardly folded to his side were still scarred and he had a gash that was slowly trying to heal across his chest.

It was time for me to make the decision. I knew what I was going to do. His pitiful story had grasped my heart and took away any will of mine to see him wither away and die. He was going to be my hatchling. He would be my apprentice, and he would maybe even end up being a friend.

I turned away from him and walked over to the edge of the pond. I waited patiently as the fish swam beneath my reflection. I took one last look over at the Sentry and sighed.

Here goes nothing.

Moving one paw in a single, fluid motion, I slashed through the water and caught a fish just between my claws, throwing it to the dragon sitting nearby. Being a fairly good throw, I managed to hit him right across the face.

"What was that for?!"

I stared over at the shocked and now offended reptile. The fish was flopping around frantically searching for the nearest source of water. I rolled my eyes and gestured to the fish with my paw.

|| If you're going to be my apprentice, then the first thing you need to learn is that your body needs food to survive, and that fish happens to be the best source of food. Now you'd best catch that thing before it lands in the water or you'll never get it back.
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Mornings were the worst. I would wake up, get prepared for the day, go through the entire village, assess the damage if a raid had occurred, then give a daily explanation about how I was going to make the village thrive to those who felt like testing my nerves that day. No, it wasn't particularly my favorite time of day.

From the time that I had woken up though, I knew that this day was to be different. There was an anomalous vibe that was surrounding my home; it made sense though. Last night we made the decision to go out for another hunt for the dragons' nest. I wasn't happy about the decision, but I knew it had to be made. There was no plausible way for us to continue living with the dragons coming forth every week. The village had enough of the ludicrous beasts aggravating their lives; personally, I had had enough.

My home was quiet. It wasn't that this was abnormal, but it was certainly uncomfortable, at least for today. I had yet to see Hiccup last night and I still had to tell him of the plan for while I went out on the hunt. I had intended to tell the boy last night, but he never showed his face. I figured he must have still been too embarrassed about the Nightmare incident.

I rolled my eyes as I replayed the situation over in my head. _How could he be so ignorant? When is he going to wake up and realize that he will need to grow up? _It bothered me dearly. I was the laughing stock of the village when it came the subject of our kids. It was always 'Why can't Hiccup be more like Snotlout?', or, 'Why can't he just stay out of trouble for a single day?' I hated to say it, but I agreed with them. My son wasn't ready to be a Viking; he wasn't ready to be anything.

The time had come that I needed to speak with the _hiccup._ I sighed deeply as I casually walked up the stairs to approach him. I made it to the top of the stairwell only to find that there was no sign of him. _Where could he be? _I walked through the room to find several articles out of place. He must have quickly rummaged through a few things and left, but it didn't look like much of anything was missing.

I turned and left the room to head for Gobber's forge. It was still dark out and anyone who was out was just walking around or preparing for the voyage. I made it to the shop and found Gobber hammering away at his latest creation. "Hello Gobber, have you seen Hiccup?"

The burly man paused, his hammer held high, then turned to look at me. "What do you mean Stoick? He is not in his room back at the house?"

I paused and looked around the shop for any sign of my boy. "No, I needed to tell him that he would be joining you in dragon training while I was on the hunt."

Gobber exchanged his hammer for the normal hook hand and walked to

Hiccup's closet in the back of the forge. "He's not here Stoick. Where could he have gone?"

I stared at him for a moment as I thought back to the last time I had seen the boy. The last thing I told him was to get back to the house. _He wouldn't have run off without coming back for the night._ "What did he tell you before you dropped him off at the house yesterday?"

Gobber turned his head as he thought back to event. "He didn't say much. He just kept going on and on about how he _really_ did hit that Night Fury, but we have all heard that story before."

I turned back to face my home resting on top of the hill. "Yes, but he never ran off after he claimed to hit the dragon. He would just try and push it off like nothing happenedâ€¦.. Do you think he went to look for it?"

Gobber came up next to me and gave me an uneasy look. "He's probably out there Stoickâ€¦. If he is, then he could very well be in danger. You can't go on that hunt if your son is missing."

I lowered my head shaking it aggregately. "I have to go on that hunt Gobber. There is no way I can just cancel the search after preparing the entire village last night."

Gobber shook his head and raised his hook to my face. "Look Stoick, I know I'm not much of a parent, but what I do know is that if that was my son out there potentially getting himself killed, I would be out looking for him until I was sure he was safe. Even if it took until the day I diedâ€¦.. You don't need to cancel the search, just let Spitelout run the mission. He can handle it. _You _need to make sure Hiccup is alright."

I turned my head to the frustrating man beside me. "Damn it Gobber. Why can't he just be like every other Viking? Why does he have to go and do stuff like-" I gestured with my head towards the forest. "this."

Gobber sighed and shook his head. "I don't know, but you need to talk to your brother so we can go out and find that boy."

I nodded and broke our eye contact. I made my way over to the port where Spitelout was making quick progress of preparing the ships. Once he caught my gaze, I gestured for him to talk in private. If there was a problem involving my son, it was best if the fewest number of people as possible found out about it.

I pulled Spitelout to the side and took a deep breath before I explained the situation. "I need you to lead the search on this hunt Spitelout. I am having some problems with a certain villager that I must stay to take care of."

He cocked his head to the side and stared at me baffled. He knew that I would never back down on my duties unless there was something major that happened. "What happened Stoick? You can't just tell me to lead _your _operation while you run off to do something completely different. "

I shook my head in shame. I hated trying to explain why _my _son was

the cause of so many problems. "It's because of Hiccup. He has gone missing and I need to find him."

Spitelout gave me a look of disgust. "Why do you keep dealing with that mistake Stoick? He has caused us nothing but trouble. We would be fortunate if he were to never come back. We might actually gain some success, especially pertaining to the raids."

I sighed and gave him a grim look. "He's my son Spitelout, I know that doesn't mean anything to you, but regardless, I have to make sure that he is alright."

My brother shook his head and turned to walk away. As he headed back to the ships he voiced his last thoughts to me. "I think it's time that you either make that boy a Viking, or get rid of him all together."

His words strained my heart dearly. How can he just tell me to get rid of Hiccup? The boy may not have been the bravest nor the smartest, or even the strongest, but he was mine. It always angered me that he would be the hiccup of the town, but I always tried my best to overlook his inabilities.

I made my way back to the forge where neither Gobber nor Hiccup was present. I walked into the back closet where Hiccup would spend much of his time trying to think of new inventions, most of which ended in disaster. I looked over some of his recent plans that he had lying on his desk. One of parchments had a list of the major dragon species and brief descriptions of them.

I quickly scanned through the list. Gronckle, Deadly Nadder, Hideous Zippleback, Monstrous Nightmare. Then in bolded letters and underlined several times it read: **Night Fury.** He wrote how he wanted to be the first to capture one of the reclusive creatures. He circled the dragon and description as if it was his one and only target.

I thought back to the night that Hiccup said that he hit a Night Fury. He seemed so confident that he actually hit that dragon, even more so than when we found out he was lying in the past. I tried to remember his exact words from the night. It was something about getting a search party out there. Where was it that he said the beast fell? Ray po-Ravine. Raven's Point. He went to Raven's Point!

I burst out of the storage closet to find Gobber just entering the forge. "Gobber! I know where he went!"

He looked at me strangely, then to the back of the shop. The door frame had been jerked out from wall and was lying on the ground. "Uh huh. So where do you suppose he went Stoick? And why do you always have to go around destroying things?"

I rolled my eyes and shook my head. "Sorry about that, but Hiccup went to Raven's Point. I was thinking back to when he left. He said that the Night Fury fell just off of Raven's Point. You know how much he wants to get a dragon. If he truly believes that he hit one, there's no doubt that he would go after it."

Gobber shifted his jaw as he pondered my theory. "He did keep saying

that he _really_ _did_ hit one. Even if he didn't hit the dragon, it's the most valid possibility that we have towards finding him."

I quickly made my way past him and out of the shop. I turned back to see him just standing there staring at me. "Are you not coming?"

He rolled his eyes and grinned. "Not that I think he really hit the beast, but I don't think it would be a bad idea to bring a few weapons to make sure we can at least defend ourselves if we come across said reclusive dragon."

I huffed and walked back into the shop. "Ok Gobber, what do you have that can kill or capture a Night Fury?"

I received a glowing smirk as he made his way over towards his weapons cabinet. The man really did love his weapons. "First we have the bolas, second we have the swords, and then we have this magnificent net thrower that Hiccup came up with. I normally don't use _his_ _inventions_, but seeing as I already _may_ have tested this one out and found out that it works flawlessly, we should definitely bring it along. It works perfectly, all you do is hold it out in front of you, aim it at your target, then pull the trigger." A large net with six small stones attached came flying out of the barrel of the device and shot right out of the forge. A loud yelp sounded as soon as the net captured its target.

We ran outside to find Snotlout entangled inside of Gobber's seemingly properly working net. Gobber beamed a smile at me. "I told you it works great."

I rolled my eyes and smirked as I looked down to the entrapped teen. He was struggling and fidgeting as he attempted to free himself. "Could one of you give me a hand?"

I looked back to Gobber who was still amused by the weapons ability. "You better bring a few of those nets in case your aim isn't as good as the dragon's ability to flee."

He sneered and nodded his head a few times. "I've got you covered Stoick." He walked back into his shop and brought out three more nets that were ready to be loaded and fired. "The beast won't even know what hit him."

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I stared at the Night Fury in shock. _Did_ he really just say that he was going to teach me? _I_ was so relieved to finally hear the words come out of his mouth. There was nothing I wanted more at the moment then to actually be able to have a friend. Well, the closest thing to a friend that I have ever had, that is. A plop and splash caught my attention while I was still staring at the dragon.

|| Great, so the first thing I try and teach you, has failed. ||

I closed my eyes and sighed as I realized that I wasn't paying attention to the fish. To be honest, I wasn't too thrilled to be

eating raw fish in the first place. "I'm sorry, uhh-" I paused for a moment as I tried to remember what his name was. _Had he told me his name? _I thought back through the times that we had talked. I didn't remember one time where he referred to himself as anything other than Dark Sentry. "I'm sorry, but what was your name?"

He looked back at me like I was an idiot. I just stared back waiting for an answer. "Your name? You know, like what I call you."

He rolled his eyes and huffed. || Yeah, I heard you the first time. Dragons don't have names, because we don't need them. It was just be redundant calling someone something over and over even though you would be directly speaking to them. ||

"But how do you pick someone out of a crowd, or just refer to them to be more direct?"

He huffed once again and sat back on his hind legs. He mumbled something about how this was going to be a long night. || You clearly don't understand how anything works with dragons, so I will be lenient, but if you start making dumb observations and statements then I swear to you that I will end your life in an instant. || He was apparently not the patient type. || Anyway, dragons don't need names because we speak through our minds. It's not vocalized like you barbarian mortals do it. You call out to the specific dragon you are talking to. Unless you are trying to speak to a crowd, no other being would hear the conversation. Our speaking is already _direct _by the way we converse. ||

I sat back and thought about his statement. "But you could still have names like we do, it gives you some individuality. Plus I won't have to go around calling you _Dark Sentry, _or _Night Fury._ I mean everyone needs to have a name. I don't even know how you would refer to yourself. Even when I'm thinking to myself, I still think of myself being _Hiccup."_

He continued to stare at me not amused. || Hiccup? Is that your _name_? Really, Hiccup? ||

I just nodded to him somewhat excited. I'm not sure why I was getting all enthused, maybe it was the fact that this was most likely the longest conversation I had ever shared with another person, well, dragon. "Yeah, I know it's not the greatest but-"

|| That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard! Why would you call yourself a hiccup? It's like saying that you're an accident or a screw-up. ||

My joyful grin soon faded as I looked back down at the grass below me. "I didn't call myself _Hiccup. _It's the name that my mother gave me."

He seemed to notice my sudden lack of enthusiasm as he calmed down and spoke in a more sympathetic tone. || Oh, but I still don't understand why she would name you that. Is that name supposed to mean something better in your culture? ||

I looked back up to him to see him staring at me with sincerity. I sighed and tried to put on a fake half smile. "Well, Vikings sometimes give their offspring names like mine to frighten off gnomes

and trolls. It's never been my favorite, but you know, it's mine. No one else has it and I kind of like that it's just me that is known as Hiccup." I thought back to all the people in the village that always thought of my name to be a perfect fit; my eyes drooped once more in response. "Unfortunately, everyone back in Berk always thought that the name suited me just right. Some would even say that _useless_ would have been a better name. I was a pretty typical hiccup."

He continued to look me over as I lay down on the grass. || Why didn't you ever just stand up for yourself? ||

I looked up to him almost shocked. "Did you not pay _any _attention to me when I was a human? I mean, I wasn't really anything to admire. I was the smallest and weakest of the tribe. There would be no way for me to stand up to them. It would be like a Terrible Terror trying to stand up to a Monstrous Nightmare."

|| No, it would be nothing like that. || I looked up to him slightly confused. || Dragons don't put others below them. We may look down on them as being less capable or not as powerful, but that never means that they are a lesser being. If we have a member of our species that has been injured or cannot help themselves, we offer our own assistance. Are you saying that mortals don't do the same? ||

I sighed as I thought back to how Snotlout would treat me if I were to have gotten hurt or was in need of help. "No, humans would rather laugh in your face because you're not a true _Viking._"

There was silence while we both took in how awful my former species was. No matter how much I tried to get the thoughts about them out of my head, they always seemed to make their way back. Even as a human, I desperately tried to distance myself from the others. The more I would be with them, the more I would come home with a arm covered in bruises, or on what ended up being a regular occasion, trying to explain the black eye I received by a certain arrogant teen. My father always knew I was lying by saying that I had either tripped or ran into something, but he would never try and force it out of me; he knew I didn't want any more trouble.

I hate them so much.

I looked back to him and noticed him staring intently upon me; almost as if he was trying to figure out exactly what I was thinking. || So, who is _them_? || Or maybe he did know what I was thinking.

I reeled back slightly eyeing him carefully. "How did you know what I was thinking?"

|| To be honest, I'm not really sure. It's happened a few times now though. It's like if you strongly thinking about something, it's almost as if you're whispering it out loud. I've never had it happen until now, but then again, I've never talked to another Sentry before. ||

I shook my head in disbelief. "There is so much that I don't understand about you guys. First the whole name thing, now you seemingly hearing my thoughts, what's next?"

The Night Fury before me rolled his eyes and huffed. || The whole name thing is dumb, and I have no idea why I can hear some of your

thoughts. ||

I watched him as he was breathing through his mouth. There was something off about his gums, I couldn't place my hand- er _paw _on it. I looked a little bit closer until he closed his mouth shut from noticing my lack of attention. "Toothless. I could have sworn you had-"

|| What? ||

I shook my head returning my attention to the dragon before me. "Toothless! You're toothless, that could be your n-"

|| Absolutely not. There is no way in hell that you're going to run around calling me Toothless, especially since it's completely inaccurate. || The dragon opened his mouth for me to get a full view of his colorless, razor sharp teeth. || See, mouth full of them. Your insinuation is false. ||

I sneered slightly and narrowed my eyes at him. "I don't think so; just a minute ago you didn't have one of those in there. There must be a way-" I started using every one of my muscles in my mouth to try and move my teeth. I must have looked like a real moron moving my jaw around in awkward motions. Suddenly the teeth quickly retracted to give me a _toothless _mouth. "See?"

He shook his head and sighed in frustration. || Regardless of the infamous ability that Dark Sentries have to retract their teeth, you are not calling me _Toothless. _That would almost be as bad as H- ||

"Hiccup?" I answered angrily. He smiled and nodded.

|| Yes, and just because you were given a ridiculously ludicrous name, doesn't mean that I need one that is just as inane. ||

I huffed and stared at him intently for a few moments. "Toothless, it has a nice ring to it doesn't it? I think it's perfect."

|| Well I sure don't. I don't understand why you're so stuck on giving a living being a name anyway. If you really insist on it, you can call me _Night Fury_. ||

I rolled my eyes as I thought about the possibility. "No, Night Fury would bring back too many bad memories, not to mention that any other dragon would instantly know that I was originally a human."

He shook his head and sighed once more. || And you running around calling me Toothless wouldn't give them any idea that you were a _human._ ||

I chuckled slightly, which ended up sounded very distorted coming from the vocals of a dragon. "Well it would certainly be better than Night Fury or _Dark Sentry. _That just sounds too, well, _dark._ No, I like Toothless much more. I think it's a great name."

|| Then if it makes you feel better, I will call _you _Toothless, and I will remain the way I originally intended. ||

"That's stupid. I can't be Toothless because I'm Hiccup, and besides,

I think that it will grow on you in time."

He huffed and started walking away towards the other side of the cove. || Just don't be surprised if you suddenly get hit with a ball of plasma when you call me that. ||

I smiled arrogantly since I felt that I won the debate with him giving up. || And you didn't win either! ||

I wonâ€¦.. "Wait up, Toothless!" A sudden blast of plasma exploded on the ground before me. "I still need you to teach me how to catch a fish with my paw."

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* * *

><p>AN: So, what is the consensus? Was the chapter any good? Is the story developing as you would suspect? Let me know what you think in the review below. I really enjoy this story even if many of you don't like it as much as 'Truth and Reconciliation'. I think I just enjoy the first person writing style more as it allows me to go more in depth with the characters.<p>

Please remember that you can visit my page to see if there is a update coming or if one was recently released and you may have missed it.

Also, the favorites and follows are what keep me going. Please keep it up.

Thank you everyone!

5. Chapter 5: Sanity

AN: I am extremely sorry for the delay. The past few weeks for me have been a whirlwind and I have had little to no time at all to work on this. I will say that this chapter in particular has been a real challenge for me. Its been one of the sole reasons for me to write this story and I knew that I had to make it right. There are parts that I enjoy and parts that I don't, but I do think that it came together fairly well in the end.

Disclaimer: This chapter has a sequence that may or may not be difficult to follow. I tried to make it fairly clear, but I didn't want to give away something that will come forth further into the story.

Without any more delay, I give you:

* * *

><p>A Fury's Tribulation<p>

Sanity

* * *

><p>A dragon thinks differently than many other creatures. One may

think that a dragon is just a mindless beast based on the fact that we usually kill those that we cross with, rather than giving the pathetic being a chance. It does not mean that we don't think it through; we just reach our conclusions much quicker than other lesser species.<p>

It's a fairly simple concept to grasp. When a situation presents itself, the dragon doesn't sit there like an idiot asking themselves meaningless questions. We take on the situation in a simple step by step process.

First, figure out if the being is potentially harmful. Next, decide whether to take action or flee. It's not like we would need to sit there and admire the person or dragon that we had come across. That would just be unintelligent and a waste of time. Dragons are quick and responsive, well, most of them, but anyway, if your opponent was going to potentially endanger your life, would you just sit there and think about how he would do it?

One doesn't go into battle thinking that their enemy would have mercy on them or ask for a truce. When someone enters battle, they only have one thing on their mind: to kill.

I have entered many battles with the intent of killing the beings I was to come across. Most often, I succeeded. I hadn't looked back and I had never planned to. The only exception to the situation has been when I came across this Sentry. I was in shock to find that I was not alone. I was completely taken back by the fact that for the first time in my life, I got to witness another member of my species. It's not like a normal thing to see, one dressed in the same hide that you're wearing whilst being a Dark Sentry. It's like I had mentioned before: I have never once seen another dragon like me, not even the ones that supposedly brought me into this world.

My battles have always been quick and painless, at least for me. It's always been about how I needed to get out of the situation in the most efficient manner. I may benefit from my higher intelligence compared to the other dragons, but that doesn't mean that they don't think in the same way. Another benefit is simply that I am one of few. Even dragons have a moment when they first lay their eyes upon me when they are shocked to see a dragon that is nearly unheard of. It's to my advantage that I can take action as soon as I come across another enemy. But this was where I was proved wrong.

Why **did ** I suddenly stop when I came across him? The question had been bothering me dearly, and yet I still had no answer to it. I was beginning to feel as if I was losing my grasp on my fighting instincts. It would only take one time for an enemy to take advantage of my brief trance and to strike.

It couldn't be that I was aging, it couldn't. I was a mere seventy years of age, only a tenth of what I should live to be. But then it hit me like ton of boulders.

I was losing my grasp because of my tail.

I could almost feel my heart fall down beneath me as I came to this realization. It made perfect sense; my sudden lack of precise fighting instincts, the abnormal amount of compassion towards a mortal, and the inability to tear him limb from limb.

It was obvious that I was losing my ability to think straight and perform perfectly, and I knew exactly what was to come.

It was always a depressing sight to witness another dragon to lose his or her ability to fly. I winced in pain as I thought back to the last creature to lose their flight near me. I went back to oversee them each day, trapped on some deserted island. Each day that passed was worse than that before it. The dragon quickly went from one of acclaimed stature to that of a whimpering Knapper. It pained me to witness such a grand rival to completely lose his grasp on reality and to be reduced to a pathetic mess.

Of course, it wasn't a happy ending to the poor beast. His body was slowly deteriorating that last time I flew overhead. The pale scales were still stained with old, dried blood from the puncture of a sharp object, the color of crumbling limestone.

I couldn't fathom what was going through his mind at the time that was so awful that he would take his own life. But now, it was as clear as day. I could understand his struggles firsthand, and I would soon become the worthless creature that he had become.

I thought back to what my life was like, before my encounter with this mortal. I was a strong, nearly invincible dragon that was a powerful leader and worthy adviser. No one questioned my abilities or my eminence. I, of course, knew of a few dragons that I would have to be set straight on the subject of my authority, but nothing more than a quick talk would assure them of my prominence. I was now feeling as though everything I had worked for would be lost. Everything worthwhile that I had ever done in my life, would vanish.

I felt a nudge on my shoulder as I peered over the water, looking at a strange imitation of what I thought was myself. I slowly turned, and saw the root of all my problems staring back at me with a concerned face.

"I-Is something wrong?" His words felt genuine and truthful, but I couldn't help but wonder if it was a side effect of my condition.

"You've been looking down at the water for over an hour now. What's wrong?" He slouched down to try and appear non-threatening. I sighed heavily, whilst taking a long, sorrowful look at the dragon before me.

"Is it because I called you Toothless?"

I rolled my eyes and snorted to myself. || No, that's not the problem. It's-â€|. It's nothing. ||

The Sentry before me stared at me with a doubtful face and narrowed his eyes. "It's clearly not nothing, if that were the case, then you wouldn't have been so consumed by it for the past hourâ€|. Look, if it's something personal, then you don't need to tell me, and I'll understand, but I can't help if I don't know the problem."

After a long pause, I shook my head and looked back up to the beast, patiently waiting for an answer. || You won't understand the problem, you've only been a dragon for a few days now. ||

"Just because I've only been a dragon for a few days doesn't mean that I won't understand why someone is hurting or having a hard time."

I huffed angrily and stepped closer to the hybrid. || Fine! You want to know why I'm having a _hard _time, well here it is. When a dragon loses their ability to fly, then they start to lose their ability to think clearly. Flying is what separates us from the lesser species, and you can't take it for granted. When I lost my tailfin, I knew that my days were numbered. It's only worse now that I'm trapped in this insignificant cove and completely helpless. Flying is what feeds your fire within. If you don't get into the sky and take in some of the surroundings, a dragon will essentially go crazy until they take their own life. ||

I looked down in shame as I felt his gaze upon me. I could still see that dragon's face in my mind's memory before he died. His desperate look had burned an image into my mind that I could never erase. It always seemed as if _that _would be the way I was to die. It always made sense as well; I never had someone to be with, no family to share my life with, and no real accomplishments to set me above the rest.

Even though I was naturally of higher rank than the other dragon species, it had never gained me any respect amongst my kind. I'd been a loner from the beginning, and have always felt that it would stay true until the end.

I slowly raised my head to accept a response from the dragon before me. He was sitting completely still, as if my words had frozen him in a state of silence. He seemed shocked that something as trivial as lack of flying could lead someone down a path so bleak that it could cause them to end their own life.

He blinked a few times and shook his head gently from side to side. "That can't be. You're saying that if you can't fly anymore, than sooner or later you're just going to become a lifeless soul?"

I sighed, and looked down the grass at his feet. || It's more than likely. It's not like that is how I feel right now, but the longer I live down in this cove, and the longer I'm kept from the sky, it will become inevitable. ||

A moment of silence hung between us as he pondered my predicament. "That's ridiculous. You can't be serious. I've lived my entire life being hated and treated like a disgrace, but I've never once thought about taking the easy way outâ€|. Life is _worth _living, you just have to give it the chance when everything else seems to have given up."

I looked back up to him with a frustrated look. || Look! Dragons aren't the same as you mortals. We have something called an inner fire that keeps us going. I know that you don't understand this, but you need to get it through that thick skull of yours. Sooner or later, I'm not going to be there to teach you about the dragon species, and I sincerely doubt any of them will be as willing as me to lecture you. We _Night Furies,_ as you call us, are not just some conversational creature that will be all excited just to see you fly in to their cove. If you were to come across another dragon in _their

_territory, you wouldn't come out aliveâ€¦|.. If you had come across me _before _I lost the ability to fly, then I would have most likely killed you on sight. It's our nature to be protective of ourselves and our possessions. ||

"But why does this inner flame need to be _refueled _just for you to have the will to keep on living?"

I rolled my eyes and huffed. || I'm not completely sure, but after you've lost something that practically defines you as a being, then the craving for that loss becomes stronger and stronger. For some reason, being a dragon, it causes that craving to eat away and get the best of you. Given enough time, it consumes you. ||

Nor was it as though I'd only seen it happen once or twice. Dozens upon dozens of dragons had fallen to the same fate that had been eating away at me. I pulled my tail around to give him another view of why my life had been dramatically shortened. ||_This _is what's killing me. It's what is keeping me from the sky and it's what's slowly ripping away at my insides. ||

He scanned the missing half of my tailfin, and brought his around to compare. "And there's nothing that can be done to fix it? I thought that lizards could regenerate their tails when broken off-"

|| You think we're lizards!? No! It's not as simple as just waiting a few days for a new tailfin to magically regenerate. There's only one way to fix my tail, and it's more than likely impossible. ||

He cocked his head to the side and narrowed his eyes slightly. "What do you mean? Are you saying that there _is _potentially a way for you to fly again, but you're just too stubborn to try it? Are you saying that even though it's a matter of life and death, you're not willing to go to the end of the world to try and fix it?"

I shook my head once again, for what seemed like the hundredth time. || No, it's that I know when something so ridiculous isn't worth trying and that it would only do more harm than good. It would only end up killing you along with me. ||

He paused and his face fell slightly. "You mean that you would need me in order to fix your tail?"

I stayed silent. I knew that I had already said too much. I should have known that he would be quick to jump to assumptions that he could magically fix my tail. || It's not as simple as you think. It would take weeks, maybe even months of painstaking effort to even _try_ and fix my tailâ€¦|.. _You _could die, we... could _both_ die. ||

He sat still for a moment thinking intently on what I just told him. I knew that there was no hope in trying to get me into the sky. It would be too risky and the percentage of success was little to none, especially with my mind becoming worse as the days past. It would only be a matter of time before I could even attempt to-

"I'll do it."

I shook my head trying to grasp what he had just said. || What?
||

He sighed, and looked down at his feet. "I said that I'll do it."

I raised my head and looked into the heavens, releasing a deep sigh in the process. || There's no point in even trying. You don't even realize that it would involve you fainting daily from the use of your fire until my tail came back into existence. It would k- ||

"I don't want to hear about how impossible it is! That's all I've heard my entire life. Well, you know what, we've done the impossible. I _should _be dead right now, but for some reason I'm sitting here right now, listening to you say how we can't do this and we can't do that. I'm tired of it!... I'm tired of how people always think that I'm completely useless, that I was a mistake and that I shouldn't have been born. I don't care about what people _say, _is impossible, because as far as I'm concerned, we've proved impossible wrong, and we can do it againâ€¦|. It doesn't matter to me if I die whilst trying to fix your tail, because if I don't try then I will end up dying anyway. You said it yourself- I have zero knowledge whatsoever about how to be a dragon, so as far as I'm concerned, I will die regardless, even if I _didn't_ fix your tailâ€¦|. You have to at least _try. _Life is _worth _living. You should be willing to give it everything you have, until you have nothing left to give, only then can you concede defeat and die. There is no way I'm going to sit around and wait for death to arrive, when I know perfectly well that I can prevent it."

The silence that came after seemed to last for ages. It was filled with his looking me over with the disgrace one would only leave for the worthless. I couldn't believe it; he wanted me to live more than _I_ did. For some crazy reason he wanted to fight until the last amount of energy was used, just so that he could say that he at least tried before moving to the afterlife. It was just so much of a shock to me, because he was more willing to try it than _I _was.

But he was right.

I _had _to give it my all. I couldn't just sit by and wait for my sanity to completely disintegrate and for me to end up like the many dragons that I had the displeasure of coming across. I'm not sure if this _Hiccup _was contagious, but it sure seemed so, considering his sway on my opinion.

It was what he said that seemed to dig down inside me and hit the hardest. 'Life is _worth_ living'. It's not something that dragons typically think about, of course, life is something we all _live_ for, but somehow it gets past us just how important it can really be. It's not just trying to make a name for yourself, or becoming the wealthiest being in the world. It's about becoming something that _you _want to be, no matter what that may be. It's about making a success for yourself, and not for those around you. When the stars burned down, did I want to be someone that lived his life because of the world around him, or did I want to be someone who lived their life for _themselves_? â€¦|. I never thought that _I _would be the one lectured on this, given the circumstances. He seemed to be a general pushover with his tribe; who knew that he would have such strong feelings about why everyone should give life their all, and recognize that life is, truly, _worth _living.

|| Alright _Hiccup, _we'll try and fix my tail, but let me tell you

this now, it will be one of the worst pains that your body may ever have to endure. It's going to feel like your body is being burned from the inside out. You're going to have to use every bit of your flame every day in order to even make a dent in our work. Once you think that you've given everything you have to give, you'll have to go again, and again, and again. When you feel like there's nothing else you can give, you'll have to look deeper inside you and find some more, because the next day you'll have to give your all. And the next, and the next. I won't be there to coach you through it, either. Each time you burn my tail, the pain is going to be so unbearable that I will literally pass out from it. Each time we do this, we are both going to end up lying on this cove floor completely helpless, and completely defenseless to any threats for several hoursâ€¦.. It's going to be far worse than anything you could ever imagine. ||

There was a pause, while he took in what this process was going to involve. "That's fine. It will be worth it in the end. _You'll _be worth it. _Life_ will be worth it."

I waited patiently while Hiccup took in the situation for what it was. I felt as if I was burning in spirit and empathy. The world around seemed to be nothing but dull shades, while our small cove was bright and vivid just as the sun was falling to let the stars arise.

My mind was racing, while I basked in the glory that was his compassion. It's not like it was something that happened every day, a fellow dragon willing to risk their life to save your own. Even if said dragon was of relations or within a deep bond, it was a rare sight to see.

Hiccup had shown me that even sworn enemies could have the potential to have a change of heart. Our respective species had been fighting for centuries, but neither side knew that the other could show the least bit of understanding towards the other. As dragons, we saw the mortals as an overweight, stubborn illness that the specific islands contained. They may have had enough sense to build homes or become established, but never to go beyond that. They seemed content with barely surviving each winter as it passed, or rationing food as it became available.

Dragons just seemed to see the world differently. Before the Empress, I was commonly venturing out to new and unvisited places. I had tasted fish from many different seas and rivers. I may have been more likely to try a new path because of my reclusive nature, but, regardless, dragons were not known to stay in one place for generations.

I watched as Hiccup used his claw to etch grooves in the dirt below him. It was yet another thing that separated mortals and dragons; who needed fabricated art when you can _live _in the canvas? As the days and nights progressed, I always had found joy in watching as the work of art in the sky swayed and streaked. Nothing was more glorious for me, than to have a quiet evening alone to watch as the deep crimson sky faded into a never ending black. Only then would the emeralds and sapphires splash into the infinite darkness in a celestial watercolor.

There was a legend among the dragons, surrounding the lights that would appear in the midnight sky. They said that the lights only

appeared because someone had created a bond of unbreakable friendship, and the lights represented their spirits dancing together until the end of time.

Hiccup had stopped his movement to admire his _handcrafted _art. I looked down upon the picture, and saw the simple markings of what seemed to outline, a Dark SENTRY. || Trying to draw yourself, I see? ||

He took a moment to admire his work for a bit longer, before looking up and eying me directly. "No, I don't draw myself. It's you; the unholy offspring of lightning and death itself, a Night Fury."

I narrowed my eyes at him, and cocked my head to the side to display my puzzled thoughts. He sighed, and lowered his head to continue to admire his work. "It's what we have always called you. My father always said that nothing else could describe a beast so heartless and merciless. The village went on and on about what a malicious wretched creature that you must be, to just fly in and take what we thought were innocent lives. Before the first time we had ever heard your notorious whistle, we had always thought the worst dragon in our world was the Whispering Death, but you proved to be the most destructive dragon that has ever come across the isle of Berk."

We sat in silence, both of us thinking about his past village. It's an odd sensation, when one finds out how little someone else _actually_ thinks of them. It's not like I would have thought that they would feel any different, but it still hits your body in the oddest of ways. I always knew that no other dragon had quite the terrifying nature that I possessed, but to hear how truly effective my presence had become, somehow diluted my enthusiasm.

Hiccup must have noticed my sudden depressive state as he brought his nose into contact with mine. I closed my eyes, and pressed my forehead firmly against his without even realizing. My mind had been such a whirlwind ever since this mortal quite literally dropped into my life. I had never once in my life felt as if I _needed _someone to lean against. It could have been that my sanity was slowly slipping away from my grasp, or the lack of benevolent treatment that was finally breaking me down. The world seemed as if it had turned upside down, because at that very moment, I felt as if I couldn't live another minute unless it was with this _Night Fury._

Hiccup was dealing with a change in his very nature that was so drastic; it was simply astonishing that he could even walk. What was really astounding, though, was his ability to still see the good in life, or even the good in a dragon whom never even considered the term to describe his own character. Hiccup simply amazed me- how he could look over all the bad things that had transpired against him, and still have the courage to save a life.

It was of sudden realization when I noticed that Hiccup had unintentionally stated a commemoration of trust. It wasn't something that happened on a regular basis. It was something that was reserved for lifelong friendships or committing oneself to another being until death. Most dragons preferred the life of solitude; it presented them with a far more remarkable lifestyle. But for someone such as I to commit to a lifelong friendship, whilst being, most likely, the most reclusive dragon known, was seemingly unheard of.

But while he did not intend to deliberately begin a commemoration, it seemed so right to continue it. If what had happened over the past few days had shown me anything, then it was that this being in front of me was genuine, and would stay true to his word. I still had the upper paw; despite being a wing down, I would still be victorious in a battle if worst came to worst.

My senses seemed to dull away, the longer my head was pressed confidently against Hiccup's. I felt nothing but the raw connection that was being made between the two of us, and the emotions passing between us. The experience was causing me to lose my grip on our surroundings, and forcing me to focus solely on the slowly forming bond.

I opened my eyes to see Hiccup staring firmly at the ground below. His gaze seemed to be so distant from the world around us. He was in a near-shocked state that was keeping him from releasing his thoughts verbally. But even I couldn't think of something to speak of. Everything that was on my mind at the moment was being clearly detailed through my emotions. It was as if I could feel him intercepting my thoughts and taking them in, just like a real conversation.

Maybe that was what was actually happening. On occasion, words are not enough to display one's thoughts. In order for them to be interpreted properly, they need to be felt. It was exactly what was happening. I could feel Hiccup's mind scanning through mine, when all the while I was scanning through his very own. A vivid picture was displayed in my thoughts of his life before the transformation. I could see the pain and suffering he was enduring. I could see the punishment and ridicule that he received day after day. But, most of all, I could see the lack of a parent, the lack of a mate, and the lack of a friend.

The connection was suddenly broken by the absence of Hiccup. I shook myself back into reality as he was staring at me almost quizzically. || What's wrong? ||

He tried to look back and forth between me and random objects scattered about the cove. Finally, after what seemed like ages, he stuttered a response. "Was that really your life?"

I thought back to what he might have been looking at, what image described my life. Nothing seemed to be completely out of the ordinary for me, but it may have seemed completely off for a mortal, I presumed. || What do you mean? ||

He paused for a moment, and let out a deep sigh. "I can't believe that you had gone through so much and think nothing of it. From the little bits and pieces that I got a glimpse of, your life would be equivalent to a living hell according to the humans. You tried for years on end to convince dozens of other dragons of a greater good, to try and save them from what I could only perceive as some kind of beast from hell. You never had any kind of parent or guardian; you never had any kind of family, or someone to fall back on in a time of need."

I took a moment to ponder his thoughts on my life, and while it may have seemed awful to him, it was completely normal to me. || Hiccup, you can't dwell in the past, you can only prepare for the future and

create a life _worth _living for. I never thought about how my life was worse than some others, I only thought about how I could make it better so I could someday thrive with a family and friendsâ€¦. I saw your life as much worse than a life of solitude. You experienced ridicule day in and day out. Even if a dragon is of lesser value, or is less important than the others, that doesn't give anyone else an excuse to deprive them of any self esteem. ||

He sat quietly for a few moments, clearly contemplating his past and the worthless mortals that made his life equivalent to a living hell. A hell that only the most nefarious of men were meant to endure post-mortem. "It always seemed as if _I _was just giving them excuses though. Any time I tried to fix a situation or a problem, disaster would be the only thing to prevail. I tried so many times to make my life better, but each attempt would only degrade me further. I only ever received disgusted looks and always overheard them talking behind my back, questioning my sanity. I wasn't lying to you when I said that you have been the first being in my life to actually listen to me."

I shook my head in disbelief that anyone would _actually _scorn another being to such an extent. || Regardless of what has happened in the past, you need to move on. Life isn't meant to be mourning about what _could _have been; it's about doing what _can _be done. ||

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I breathed heavily as I trudged up the hill, ascending into Berk's forest. With Gobber at my side, we were making slow progress to cover the ground that Hiccup would have most likely traveled. I looked up ahead to the top of the hill, but sadly, nothing worth mentioning came into view.

My heart was racing with every step I took. I couldn't stop thinking about the worst possible situation. _What if he's already gone? What if I'm too late? _I could sense that Gobber was thinking the same thing, judging by the dead silence that had surrounded us every since we had left.

The pressure of finding him was building up inside me, as we struggled to find any sign of my boy. It felt as if my heart was going to burst from my chest, as I longed to shout to the heavens in hope of finding Hiccup, but I did not open my mouth. I didn't want to give away our position to any hostile predators. I just continued to remain silent, as we fought our way through the dense forest with the slightest bit of hope that we could succeed in finding Hiccup.

I stumbled over some low-lying branches, and stopped to regain my breath from near exhaustion. It was the last straw. I had to scream in order to voice my anger and frustration. I no longer cared about my own safety, I just wanted my son. "Hiccup!" My voice bellowed throughout the forest, and causing birds to scatter and other small forest animals to flee the forest.

"Hey now, we don't need a Night Fury coming to find us now do we

Stoick?" Gobber's voice was filled with both sarcasm and assertiveness.

I turned back to see the burly man carefully walk over the branches I had just stumbled over. "Where can he be, Gobber? We haven't seen a trace of him, and it's nearing sunset already. If we don't find some sign of him soon, then we're going to need to head back for the night."

Gobber was eying the branch carefully as I spoke to him. Suddenly, the piece of broken wood caught my attention. There was a deep gulch running down the hill from where I had just tripped over the branch. I turned, and started to cautiously make my way down the hill. I felt a hand grab my shoulder and pull me back around. Gobber was placing his finger over his mouth, and motioning for me to stay as quiet as possible.

It was very unlikely that we would see the creature that caused such damage to the soil and earth covering. At Gobber's request, I silently made my way down the destroyed landscape. Once I reached the bottom of the hill, I peered over a natural lip in the hill to see if there were any beings still at live.

What I saw was the last sight that I wished to see.

Just over the small hill was a small pile of tattered clothing, as well as some remnants of shredded rope. I briskly whipped my head away from the terrible sight that was before me. I could only pray that Thor did not allow my son to be the previous owner of the shreds of clothing.

Gobber eyed me carefully and made a shrugging motion with his shoulders. He knelt down and whispered as quietly as possible. "What was it?"

I took a deep breath and slowly looked back over the lip to see if the beast at blame still resided. All that could be seen were the tattered clothes and the bits of rope. I turned back to Gobber, and looked up at him nervously.

"My worst nightmare."

We inched our way over the hill to inspect the crime scene for any possible evidence, or any clues to Hiccup's whereabouts. As we approached the desecrated spot on the ground, my mind drew a blank. I couldn't grasp what was before me. The shreds of the remaining shirt and pants were clearly burnt by the flame of a dragon before being torn from the victim's body.

I fell to my knees once I reached what was left of the green tunic. It was at that point that I knew, it was then that I knew, I was officially alone.

After what seemed like an eternity of simply holding the charred remains of clothes in my hands, my mind went into overdrive. Everything started hitting me all at once. The shirt I was holding had belonged to Hiccup, my Hiccup. The marks of fire being released upon an innocent soul were determined for my son. My own heart was beating with the force of Thor's great thunder that shattered the sky above. It ached with irregular strain and the pain of sudden

loss.

The forest went to absolute silence around me as the impact of the situation finally set in on me. It was as if the sound around me had suddenly been taken from existence and replaced with a ear-splitting silence. I struggled to breathe through my disorientation.

Within moments, fluid was flowing in full force from just below my eyelids. I lowered my head, and pleaded to the gods that this had all been a terrible nightmare. I wanted nothing more than to wake up and find my son sleeping soundly in his bed back at home; but, of course, my prayers would go unfulfilled.

A soft hand landing on my shoulder brought me back to reality. I could feel my grasp on what was real slipping away by the second. The sound of Gobber's voice was of pain and sincerity. The words were coming to me in a mumble that couldn't be deciphered. I shook my head to try and regain my ability to hear correctly. Once again Gobber's voice came, but this time came with a much clearer tone. "I'm so sorry Stoick."

I waited for what must have been an hour before responding to the man's sincerity. I had finally gained the will to react to him. It was just so much for me to realize all at once. Hiccup must have felt useless to the tribe, causing him to try and prove himself to be better. I had been no help to the situation by being one of those that had ridiculed him and made him feel worthless. I was a part of the group that would reduce him to tears and forced him to try and _fix_ the problem. What I hadn't realized was that _I_ was the problem. _I_ was the one who should have been teaching him properly, _I_ should have been guiding him to success; _I_ should have been a father.

"I did this."

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The words that Toothless were throwing at me were such an opposition to what I had grown up thinking. Even though they were nothing like what the Vikings' way has been portrayed, everything he said seemed so much moreâ€¦. Right.

The ways in which I used to think were flawless, were beginning to seem more and more mistaken. Toothless wasn't exactly the type of being that I would have envisioned showing me how everything that we knew was wrong. He had opened my eyes to see far more than I could have ever seen as a human.

Seeing that my entire world had abruptly turned upside down, I was being forced to literally look through the world through a new set of eyes. I was seeing the way things worked outside of the traditional Viking way. I was seeing the problems of the Viking heritage that never seemed to cross my mind before I was a dragon.

It was then in which I realized just how lost I truly was. If I hadn't stumbled into this cove or ran into (or, rather, was ran into

by) the very Night Fury before me, only the gods would know how long I would have survived.

I was in such a state of confusion. My entire life up until this point had seemed completely out of place. I was losing the trust I had in my very own village, but the trust I had been losing was being replaced by a certain black reptile that left me with more and more questions than answers about him every moment we spent together.

The entire experience that I had gone through was both intimidating and incredible at the same time. It was an almost unconscious decision when Toothless pressed his forehead into mine. It was like he didn't even notice what was going on. We were just sitting in silence for one moment, then all of a sudden he was pressed firmly against me with his eyes closed.

I stayed completely still, in fear that if I had disturbed the moment he would have scorched me with a plasma blast. Not that I knew if that would hurt me or not. With my luck it would probably turn me back into a human.

It didn't take long for me to realize what was happening though. I came to the conclusion that it must have been some sort of ritual that dragons go through to ensure trust with one another. Once I got past the odd sensation that was passing throughout my body, I learned to embrace the phenomenon. I started to feel Toothless' body and hear his thoughts and memories. The world around was blurring away into silence while all of my focus was centering on the dragon pressed against my snout.

I could briefly see occurrences that happened throughout his life. It was as if I was watching a slide show of his past. I could see his reclusive status amongst not only the Vikings, but among the dragons as well. He was such a dragon that was almost seen as an outcast or a misfit amongst his kind. While other dragons seemed to have families or close friends to reside with, none of the images flying through my head showed Toothless with any sort of acquaintance.

I started to focus deeply on the life passing before me. I could see the infamous Night Fury, perched upon a ledge of what I could only assume to be a volcanic mountain. I watched as a hoard of dragons poured from the mountain's peak while one lagged behind in pain. A sheer massive claw collapsed around the last soul fighting to escape. The movement veered towards the black Night Fury as he etched a crude marking into the ledge below him. A subtle groan escaped his mouth just before he launched away from the ledge to catch the herd of fleeing dragons.

I pulled my head away from Toothless and starred in shock at the dragon before me. He remained perfectly motionless as if I had never left. Eventually a long sigh finally fell from him as he slowly opened his eyes to reveal a sorrowful look.

I couldn't help but to be curious about the life of the being before me. I stared up at him quizzically, only to receive the very same look in response. I quickly dodged his glare, hoping to find something else of interest within our cove, to no avail. I heaved in a deep sigh and looked him back in the eye. "Was that really your life?"

I had already known the answer to the question, but I needed to hear from him that what I presumed was true. It was like I was leery of trusting him. I had grown up in a village that hated me and would do anything they could to either embarrass me or hurt me. It wasn't that I thought that Toothless would be one to turn against me; it was that I never truly had someone that I could thoroughly trust. I kept imagining that I would wake up and every bit of this would have been a terrible dream, but even if it would have been, I would have woken up with complete disappointment that in the life that I had was that of a human.

The life of a dragon was beginning to appeal more to me than the worthless life that I once had. The longer I gazed into Toothless' eyes, the more I felt a bond being forged between us. His trust was beginning to become something that I craved and longed for. I wanted to become someone he could rely on as well. I wanted a friend that truly wanted to be a friend with me, not someone who was being forced.

Eventually, I received the answer that anyone could have guessed. He described that he had a life that he made for himself, and he looked to the future rather than dwelling in the past. He chose to look ahead and make the most out of what he had, rather than wishing for a different outcome. His logic seemed so undeniably irrefutable that nobody would second guess him.

Toothless was no longer just a random being that I bumped into coincidentally. He was turning into the figure that I wanted to model my life after. Even after living a life of being almost completely alone, he was still one that had a life worth envying. The Fury's tribulation was one that had transformed him into a being that was caring and supportive. Well, most of the time.

I sat patiently and continued to gaze upon him as a role model. I had never seen another being that actually had a life that was worth looking up to. My father was the complete opposite of what I was and I had no desire to become his successor. I could care less for being the chief of a constantly struggling village or the leader of a tribe that was too stubborn to look at a situation for what it was, rather than simply reacting to it. Gobber was the only person that I could even remotely relate to, but even he was no exemplar figure to me.

Toothless had the traits of an individual. He had a life of solitude. He lived the life of a recluse. He never judged the ones around him based on a hierarchy system. He didn't look down upon the people who were less capable. He simply kept to himself, but offered assistance where needed.

I couldn't believe that he of all dragons could have the qualities of a gentle, almost docile creature. His incredible power that used to reign down upon our village, never depicted the wielder to be gracious in any sort of way. I just wished that I could have met him long before, under kinder circumstances.

Although, it still puzzled me dearly why he would even consider letting me live after finding out that I was the human that nearly took his life and destined him to never reach the sky again. His will to forgive was admirable, but his ability to go as far as helping the one that would have most likely ruined his life, I was

astounded.

After what seemed like ages I had to speak the thought that was aching inside of my head. "Why did you do it?"

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I shook my head, dismissing my thoughts upon hearing Hiccup's voice. I kept thinking that the mortals must have had some sort of way to know what the other was thinking because he always assumed that I knew exactly what he was. || Just because I was looking at you doesn't mean I know what is going on inside your head. ||

Hiccup causally rolled his eyes and made the distinct groan that all Sentries shared. "Why did you help me? Why did you let me live? Why did you not just kill me the moment you found out I was a human?"

_Ohâ€|. _

Definitely not what was crossing my mind at the moment. I stared over the cove's small pond while I thought back to the moment I let him live. I had gone through the scene so many times trying to figure out the absolute best plausible way to deal with the dragon before me. It wasn't like I just went out on a whim and let him live. It took so much from me to even think about not shredding him to pieces right then and there. But there was one thing that stopped me from taking his life.

I took a deep breath and slowly looked back at him. || It was trust. It was the trust that you had placed in _me_ that made my decision. You had little to no chance of living, and you put everything on the line by asking for a paw when in need. It was then that I knew that you were completely honest. It was then that I knew I could trust _you_. _It was when you were breathing what could have been your last few breaths, that I knew you had been reduced to your core. Driven to bargaining anything for your life. It was then that I could see you for who you truly were. I could see that you were not the Monstrous Nightmare that I assumed all mortals to be. You seemed to stand away from the rest of the group, like a lone soul that could thrive away from that village in which you came from. You seemed as if you were almost destined to be a _Night Fury. _||

The silence that followed was to be expected. I watched him tentatively as he thought about what I presumed to be _his _destiny. I could almost relay exactly what _must _have been going through his mind. _Why hadn't I become a dragon from the start? Why couldn't I have been born as a dragon rather than to the humans that have robbed me of so much? Why couldn't I have lived the life of Night Fury?_

But now he could.

"But now I can."

I smirked slightly at my accurate presumption. I looked over the

dragon before me and saw the being that could be. I saw the Sentry that just needed some knowledge of the life of a dragon. I saw a future _Night Fury._

|| You will be a Night Fury, Hiccup. You have the respect for the ones around you that one would need. You have the loyalty that will serve you well in this world. You have the intelligence to judge your decisions with accuracy. You have the ability to become something that you probably never could have as a mortal. ||

He looked up at me and gave a toothless grin. "You said Night Fury."

I sat back and gazed over his Sentry resembling body. The figure was no doubt that of a Dark Sentry, but his acid green streaks gave him the individuality that would separate him from me. He would always fall under the same species of dragon that I did, but I knew that there would always be something different about him. || You _are _a Night Fury, Hiccup. I was born a Dark Sentry and will remain one until the day I perish, but you were born a Night Fury. You came to this body knowing nothing about the dragon species except that you had been transformed into a Night Fury. That is what you are. You are the one and only and you should be known that way amongst our kind. ||

He paused as he looked up at me with pride. Almost out of nowhere, he once again pressed his head into mine, to reestablish the connection that we had before. I didn't search through his past like I had before though, and I could feel that he wasn't doing the same to me. All he wanted was to feel the bond that was pulling us together.

After what seemed like ages we both pulled away and opened our eyes. A gleaming reflection from the pond caught my eye, and I looked to the sky to find the origin; the light that was reflecting brought a chill throughout my body. In the sky, ribbons of colorful light were dancing in harmony to what could have been a glorious, yet silent symphony. I watched as the reds and greens clashed together, giving the illusion of an eternal connection.

I thought back to the common myth about how the lights were formed, and I knew that we must have been the cause; the creation of an everlasting bond strong enough to last to the death. It was the serenity, that was giving the moment absolute silence, as we were basking in the glory of the moment.

"Beautiful, isn't it?"

I gave one last sigh as I continued to watch the colors paint a vivid picture of our remarkable friendship.

|| You have no idea. ||

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><p>AN: Did this chapter meet or exceed your expectations. I really hope so. I thoroughly enjoyed writing this even though it took several tries to make it work. Did Toothless' behavior leave you

questioning him? Just remember that the title for this chapter was intentional.<p>

I really appreciate all of the reviews, favorites and follows that this story has generated.

I would like to thank all of you for taking the time to read this and give this story a chance. I would like to also thank the betas for all the hard work that they put into this. I am a very fortunate soul.

Great news! I had some extra help on this chapter and I would like to personally thank Absi B. It sounds like they will be helping out from here on out as well!

Please remember, if you loved it to hit that Favorite/ Follow button.

Keep checking back to my profile page for updates on this story as well as my others. I keep it updated fairly frequently.

Thanks again!

6. Chapter 6: Quintessence of Equilibrium

AN: I'm very sorry about the delay, but as I'm hoping that you expected, it was the holidays and I had little to no time to work on this. Just to let you know, I recently went and saw The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, and I ended up using a quote from it in this chapter.

Even with the delay, I fell in love with this chapter, it ended up being different than planned, but I really like the way it is.

I give you:

* * *

><p>A Fury's Tribulation<p>

Quintessence of Equilibrium

Part One

* * *

><p>You learn a great amount when you gaze into the darkness. You see things that may have never been visible, until your eye adjusts to the correct dilation. It's in the dark, that beings show their true colors. The sky only shines with the hues of sapphires and violets on the darkest of nights, which bring out the shades that aren't visible in the light. A creature typically won't show their own colors until they are out of sight or in the dark.<p>

The lights that shine down from the heavens are what we think of as symbols of eternal friendship, or acquaintanceship. Unfortunately, the myth that most dragons believe has its faults. I, for one, never believed that anything that was supposed to represent something so powerful and so immense, such as eternal friendship, could come from

a graphic so transcendental.

I had always scoffed at the notion of something being such an easy coincidence, or leaving anything to chance. I had always thought that because the colorful display of lights randomly occurs on different nights, they didn't represent that two beings had created something intangible.

An eternal bond needed to have something behind it. It needed to have something to help hold it together. Just because two beings could stand to live with each other for a short period of time, didn't mean that they could be soul mates. You can balance with someone for one minute, and then be completely thrown off the next. An eternal bond needs to have the backing to make it last. It requires the commitment of each member to strive and make it take place. There needs to be qualities from each person that match the qualities and traits of the other.

Equilibrium.

It's the state in which opposing forces match up to create a distinct balance. It's the result of two influences working together to create stability; the perfect distribution that will invariably equal out. When one side falters, the other needs to be able to compensate.

I've tried numerous times over the years to accomplish equilibrium with other dragons. Being a Dark Sentry, it's easier said than done. It's easy for two Infernohides to balance their characteristics together simply because they can relate on many different levels. It's not so easy for something like a pathetic Knapper to balance with a dreaded Double-head. The beings must match in ways that can be beneficial to both.

So why did I suddenly feel like all of those myths about the lights were in fact, no longer myths? Why did I feel like the lights that were dancing before my very eyes truly were meant for the bond between Hiccup and I; potentially creating equilibrium?

It was inexplicable.

I could have never fathomed being attached to a being as much as I was at the moment. Hiccup meant more to me than any other person I had rested my eyes upon. The connection between us was almost tangible. The colors dancing before us were a testament that our friendship was, in fact, eternal.

It wasn't that I didn't want to believe that our bond was true to its core. It wasn't that I was afraid that if proven wrong, my heart would shatter. It was just that, what I had believed for so long, now seemed broken.

Myths and legends are just that, something that is passed down from generations to generation, to inspire and inform those who haven't experienced it for themselves. The myth about the waving illuminations in the sky was always the simple myth, as I wanted it to be. The truth was that I never believed someone could create such a powerful bond. I never believed that two beings would be able to stand each other long enough to remain together for eternity. I never believed that one dragon could completely change the outlook on _my

_life.

I was so lost in the emeralds and crimsons above me that I didn't seem to notice the dragon in question eyeing me intently. I slowly brought my vision down to the pond that was before us, only to see the reflections of our bond still flashing momentarily.

Hiccup came to my side and turned towards me. "What are you thinking about?" His tone was regretful, almost like he was apologizing for something. His question was so unpretentious, but little did he know the gravity of what was on my mind.

I sat quiet for a moment to think about what to tell him. _Do I tell him the truth? Do I tell him that I think that what we have created is astounding? Do I try and explain why I have been so lost in the midnight sky, for hours on end? _I was so lost from the mesmerizing sight, I couldn't come up with a decent answer. || It's complicated. ||

The Sentry imitation shot me an annoyed expression and huffed. He knew that I was simply too indolent to give him a proper answer. "Do you really think that anything you say will be a surprise to me now? I mean, look at me: I'm a dragon, a Night Fury no less."

I gave a small smirk and looked up into his eyes. His acidic, amber irises were shining particularly bright, from the reflection of the midnight sky above. His brows furrowed, morphing into a questioning state, but he smiled nonetheless. I breathed in a deep sigh and gave a subtle smile right back. || I'm not really sure how to explain it. It's actually about a myth regarding our kind. ||

His gentle smile gave way for an inquisitive stare. "You mean, a myth about Night Furies?"

I shook my head in response. || No, actually, it's about all dragons, and everyone else for that matter. They say that these lights that shine above us are a tribute to an eternal bonding. They- ||

"An eternal bonding of what? Dragons?"

I paused for a moment and stared at him in irritation. || Just let me tell the story. ||

He slouched down slightly and looked up apologetically. || Anyway, they say that when two beings have created a bond that is powerful enough to last an eternity, these lights appear. It's an old myth that has always been told to the hatchlings, to help lift their spiritsâ€. It has never really been something that I believed in, but after what has happened tonight, it seems far more credible. ||

The Fury gazed at me for what seemed like an eternity, his pupils dilating significantly. "You think _we're _the reason that the lights above us are shining?"

I gave a small shrug, and turned back to what I had now dubbed the reflecting pond. || Like I said, I'm not completely sure about it. I just couldn't believe how coincidental it was, considering what had happened. I had always scoffed at the theory, but now- ||

There was a pause while the two of us gazed across the reflecting pond, both of us questioning what we thought was ludicrous. "It seems so plausible."

I slowly turned my head towards the Night Fury; I had decided that since he was no longer a mortal, but neither a Dark Sentry, I could refer to him as what he thought he was: a Night Fury. The acidic lenses of his eyes were glinting with integrity, while the moonlight was showing the true colors that he burned with. The jade streaks that lined his body seemed to glow against the midnight light, giving him the appearance of a contaminated dragon.

I gave him a once over and sighed. I gestured over to the ground beneath the foliage of the trees with my snout. || I think it's about time that we get some rest. You're not going to like what we have coming tomorrow, and you're going to regret not getting the sleep that your body so desperately needs. ||

He gazed at me in slight annoyance. "Even as a dragon, I'm told when I need to go to bed."

I rolled my eyes and huffed as I started making my way to my resting place. I inhaled deeply, and blew it out as a stream of viscous fire to make myself a heated bed. || Some rules are universal across all species. ||

He watched as I circled on my newly warmed bed and lay down for the night. "Yeah, well, I thought that maybe now that I'm a Night Fury, I could have a _little _bit of freedom."

I smirked at the young dragon, and closed my eyes as I wrapped my tail around myself. || Trust me, you will _never _gain the freedom that you so desire. It's just like the bonding and the lights, they're all myths. ||

There was a long pause which nearly gave me the opportunity to fall into the state of rest. _Nearly._ I was rudely interrupted by a slight pester at my side. I opened my eyes to see a certain desperate-looking Night Fury pathetically staring at me. || What now? I'm not going to stay up all night gossiping with you about how pretty the sky is at night. ||

He continued to look at me with his seemingly begging eyes, until he slowly started creeping towards me. I watched in confusion as he crawled underneath my wing and slid his body next to mine. Once he was finally settled into a comfortable position, I let out an exasperated sigh. || You really need to learn how to burn your own bed. ||

He remained silent and simply adjusted himself so he could be closer to the heat source,- in essence, _me. _I rolled my eyes once more, and laid my head down for the second time to finally get some rest.

"Toothless?"

My eyes shot open and revealed highly aggravated, refined slits. || WHAT?! Is it not normal to _actually _sleep when you go to bed? ||

There was a pause while I listened to the sound of our hearts beating. "I just wanted to sayâ€¦ thanks â€¦ for everything."

I breathed one last sigh, and closed my eyes for the third time to rest. I was beginning to debate whether or not I should have put up with the youngling. || You're welcome, and good night. ||

"Good night, Toothless."

The things that I have to put up with.

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The feeling of wind was like ecstasy upon my obsidian wings. I was so utterly lost in the breeze that flowed across each of my wings and fins. Each of the black extensions were moving flawlessly through the air, making the movement glorious. I never had experienced something that was quite so incredible.

Flying was something that seemed to be reserved for those who were deserving of it. I wasn't sure why I was suddenly so worthy of the magnificent implementation. It seemed like I was just speaking with Toothless about how we were going to repair his lost tail fin.

I started looking around from side to side, an almost blurred motion as I swept the horizon. I looked around myself trying to find the reclusive dragon who had gifted me with the ability of flight, but he was nowhere to be seen.

I tried to remember when I had last seen the mass of obsidian scales, but for some reason, I couldn't remember where the last place I had seen him was. The most recent memory I could access was soaring above the immense clouds as I was currently doing. I peered over my shoulder and looked past my solid black body in continuous search for the dragon.

Then it hit me.

My scales were not the solid black that encompassed my friend. _My_ body was scattered with the acidic streaks that resembled scars from appalling lacerations. I tried to shake my head to rid myself of the inaccurate visual, but nothing happened. I continued to fly along with no control whatsoever over the situation.

I strained to piece together the puzzle that was my head. _Why_ am I in Toothless' body? Why can't I control my movements? Where am I flying to- _How_ am I flying? _nothing_ about the present situation made sense to me. It was like I was dropped into some position without any notice or forewarning.

I only remembered the night before, when Toothless had informed me of what he assumed the purpose of the Aurora Borealis was. I only recalled falling asleep at his side, absorbing the emanating heat from his core.

It was then that I realized exactly what was happening; I was

dreaming.

One of the hardest things to do is to try and remember what happened in a dream, and one of the oddest feelings is realizing that you are encompassed in one. It always seems that the dream completely falls apart, or turns into an entirely different direction. In my case, the dream simply went dark.

Even whilst being immersed within a confusing dream, morning seemed to come drastically sooner than I would have liked. It wasn't that I was afraid of what I knew the day was to bring, but everything seemed so much more calm in the night. Even as a human, I lived for the night. It was then that I was away from the daunting crowds and overbearing ridicule. At night, I could finally have the peace I needed to work on the things that I enjoyed most.

Each night, I would stay up late into the morning hours, either drawing, or thinking of new ways to enhance my reputation with the Vikings. The latter seemed hardly worth it, day after day. Any of the good inventions that I actually came up with were typically stolen from me and assumed to be conjured by a much more worthy Viking. It was seldom that I received any credit whatsoever for any sort of accomplishment.

I did, however, remember the one occurrence that seemingly made my life worth living. I had just finished designing a new weapon that would temporarily disorient a dragon's senses. It gave a loud explosion which would affect the dragon's hearing, and the remnants of dirt and debris could be directed towards the dragon's vision. The first times I used it, it worked flawlessly. The dragon would fall to the ground and start flailing whilst attempting to reorient itself with its surroundings. Of course, I never got to try the weapon out on a larger dragon though. The only chances that I ever had were with the Terrible Terrors, despite the limitation, it worked perfectly.

I called it, Ballista. Named after the Roman version, only mine used a different firing propellant than the original.

I had never been more proud to actually make something that worked. It was unfortunate that no one got to see my work as one day when showed up at the forge, my weapon was gone. Along with it were all of my blueprints for the design and any notes I had related to it.

I tried several times over to recreate the exploding device, but I was never successful. There always seemed to be some sort of issue that would go on when I would be working on a replacement. Either a dragon attack would destroy the forge, with all the contents along with it, or Gobber would suddenly have a drastic assignment for me to take care of. Each time, I would return to an empty storage closet. I asked the burly man over and over what happened to all of my work, but he always claimed to know nothing of it.

It was easier to put things in the past and look to the future, rather than trying to dwell on it. I knew that my ideas were usually good ones, just not always foolproof. I learned to love the trialling and testing of new inventions. There was always a sense of the unknown when firing a weapon for the first time. Granted, that's what probably got me the name Useless among my village, but it was something that I lived for. Even the bola-launcher that seemingly worked perfectly, I was proud to be the one who made it.

My success with the launcher was short-lived, obviously, but then again, I'm not quite so sure I would change it. I wouldn't have had the chance to meet the greatest friend that I have ever had. I might not have made the best first impression on Toothless, but he certainly warmed up to me, literally.

The warmth that was emanating from his body was most likely the only thing keeping me alive. Even whilst having my body fashioned into the tightest form I could manage, the cold would still penetrate the scales that coated my flesh. The only comfort that I received was the fact that I was pressed up against the body of the Night Fury beside me, his wing a leathery blanket draping over my body.

There was much for me to be thankful of. It was no longer him simply protecting me from the bitter cold; he was willing to stay by my side and teach me how to exist as a dragon. Toothless wasn't the fearsome creature that so many thought of when someone mentioned the arrow-like dragon, as black as the night and as swift as the wind. He was simply a being trying to manage in the world around him just like every other being. It was strange to think that Vikings considered dragons so different to them, when they were, in essence, so similar—the beings known as Vikings trying to exist in their world, the beings known as dragons, in theirs. There was bound to be some overlap.

When I finally opened my eyes, I saw that the day was still young. The midnight sky was still present, but a faint glow could be seen on the horizon. I exhaled, my breath catching frost in the air and informing me how frigid the actual air temperature was. I slowly lifted my head, and glanced over to the dragon who was protecting me from the glacial weather.

Toothless was still ensconced in his slumber, his chest heaving ever so slightly with each breath. It was the first time that I had seen him actually asleep. He didn't appear as the dangerous and lethal creature that he was. The soothing reverberations that emanated from him gave him the physique of someone who was calm and protective. In truth, he was someone who was calm and protective; he had been patient with me ever since I fell into the cove. The way that he wrapped his tail around me was indicative of his defensive and shielding nature.

I was thrilled to finally have someone that I could open up to, someone who would listen to my thoughts and not judge me for them. He was someone that would go out of his way in order to see me succeed, someone that would be willing to put my needs before his.

Someone that I envied.

He had his faults just as everyone else in this world did, but he didn't let those problems get in the way of his progress. He didn't allow his difficulties get in the way of what he wanted to achieve.

He never saw me as someone who was of lesser worth than him. When he decided to try and execute me when we first met, it wasn't out of dominance, it was for protection. He was never for war, he was merely in the wrong place at the wrong time.

I gazed over the open waters of our cove. War had always been a part of our kind, Viking or dragon. The war between our two races had always seemed as if it had a hollow shell. Even if the Vikings were strong enough to stop the dragons from coming back, what would they do next? The philosophy had always been that something worth having, was worth fighting for, but if they lost the species to fight against, they would simply fight themselves. They _needed _the dragons, whether they knew it or not.

|| The war is hollow on both sides. ||

I shook my head, and looked back to the dragon who was seemingly resting next to me. It still baffled me how he could hear my thoughts every now and then. "How is that? Weren't you guys just stealing food to feed you families?"

Toothless opened his eyes to reveal the emerald irises; his head still relaxing upon his paws. || The entire foundation of the war is flawed. Every other dragon that attacks your village, is under siege. If it were up to them, they would get their food from the sea like dragons elsewhere. If it were up to them, they wouldn't have anything to do with attacking the mortals. ||

I let out a deep sigh as I thought about his view on the subject. The war had always been a controversial subject, probably even more so with the dragons. "What do you think about it?"

He looked over to me, with his emotions showing so strongly. His eyes were set as refined slits, his ear plates were laid back against his head, and his strong deep breaths emphasized his opinion on the matter.

Toothless was always showing his emotions vividly. From the day we first met, his hatred and aggression were displayed intensely. Even from the previous night, his dilated pupils had given him an appealing presence, and the plates that shot to the sky in interest from the top of his head revealed the almost adorable standing that he pulled off so well. The dragon was excellent at displaying the feelings that were resonating throughout his mind.

He was one to wear his heart on his sleeve.

But even with the emotions that he managed to pour out of himself, there was a time when words were necessary, there was a time that words were needed to disrobe the raw feelings that one had towards the subject.

|| What do I think? What do _I _think?... I think that it's outrageousâ€|. I think that it's ludicrousâ€|. I think that it's ridiculous, disgraceful, appalling, atrocious, depressing, horrific, disgusting, murderous, injudiciously vulgar, vile, venomous, and I think it all with vicious vehemence! ||

The raging Night Fury had gotten up from lying upon the ground to hover over me with appealed, betrayed intensity. His eyes, as thin as the shadow of a hair. I could practically _feel _the hatred that he withheld towards the war that roared around us. || The beast responsible for this has destroyed so much more than anyone could have thought possible. It's not just the forcing of us to go to war, it's not just the constant threats to our lives, and it's not even

the killing of a dragon every time she shows her wretched face. It's the fact that she has demoralized each and every dragon under her control. She has ripped away the quintessence of life from their very mindset. She has destroyed all ambition that the dragons once had, and replaced it with the slave-minded imitations that you have had the displeasure of seeing. The dragons are no longer dragons, not really; they are merely shells, airworthy shells with which she can wreak her havoc and not have to leave her post. ||

There was a pause while we both thought about the fate of not only our own species, but the other's as well. I suddenly felt so self-centered, not thinking about how much pain and suffering that we caused by brutally murdering the dragons who raided our village.

I gazed up at Toothless, who was staring down indignantly. || There is so much more than this meaningless war. We have been at war with one another for so long that neither side knows of their aims any more, except to eliminate any members of the other faction. We both have been turned into nothing more than mindless killing machines, our minds filled with the thought of the blood of our enemies flowing out into the grass, and little else. The dragons have so much more to live for that they have completely forgotten about. I know many of them personally who have families that never got to see their father or mother come home. They are so lost in this simulated world that they consider their life. They have lost the meaning of living that used to drive them so powerfully. They used to believe in something beyond the mind of a slave. They used to aspire to become better than who they were. They used to _dream _of a better reality. They used to see the world, things dangerous to come to, to see behind walls, draw closer, to find each other, and to feelâ€|. _That_ is the purpose of life. ||

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The brisk cool air traced shivers down my spine. I may have been a large burly man on the outside, but that does nothing against the brutal freezing air that plagued Berk this time of year. Winter was on our horizon, but even so, I was still lost in the present.

As my eyes peeled open, I once again saw the remains of the aftermath of a so called _Night Fury. _My blood began to boil as soon as I pictured the malicious reptile. I felt determination like I had never felt before. Determination to destroy what had taken a part of me. I lusted for nothing more than the head of that dead Night Fury mounted upon my wall, as I showed my dominance over the insignificant beast. I was so entranced in the thought of making sure that dragon wouldn't live to see another day, I was completely oblivious to the world waking up around me.

Gobber's trademark groaning was the first of the morning sounds to reverberate through my ears. "Stoick, why is that every time that I go off on some adventure with you, I end up sleeping on the cold, hard ground?"

I turned my head and gaped at the man with an aggravated stare. His comical attitude and frustrated face quickly disintegrated into a

look of sorrow. "Oh, right."

I breathed in a deep sigh as I sat up and once again looked over the pile of tattered clothing and remnants of roping which was all that remained of my son. I wanted nothing more than to hold him in my arms and speak the words that I was always too shameful to admit to him.

I always thought the words went without saying, but now, as my last chance to do so has been stripped away from me, I realized how much they truly meant. My boy was the last of my family. I had no heir to pass my legacy along to. I had no son to pass down the right to chieftainship. The last hope of a great line of leaders, now ended with me. The last love of my life, was gone.

I now regretted every moment that I didn't take the chance to tell him. I wished so much that I could take back every hurtful thing that I had ever said to him and replace them with what I now felt.

I loved him.

He was my son. How could I not love him? How could I have treated him the way I did for so many years and not realize the harm that was being done? How could I not see the damage that I was causing and stop myself from the making the same mistakes time and time again?

I knew I had to make it right. I had to fulfill what my son had started and finish what needed to be completed. I knew in my mind that I was going to kill the dragon who slayed my son. He may have been the first Viking to down a Night Fury, but I just had to be the first Viking to eliminate the beast for good.

I looked back over to Gobber, who was still giving me the apologetic stare. I clenched my teeth together in anger as I imagined myself ripping the beast apart, limb from limb. "Gobber?"

There was a pause while he took a good look at me, trying to read my emotions. "Yes, Stoick?"

I nodded my head faintly. "We're taking down that Night Fury. I'm going to kill that dragon if it's the last thing I do."

A small smile crept across his face as he exhibited a mischievous look. "And I will be right beside you, if it's the last thing I do."

The wail of a dragon echoed throughout the forest, announcing itself to the rest of the world, and to its predator.

Gobber quickly scanned the edge of the forest and turned back to me. "The unholy offspring of lightning and death itself. Never engage this dragon. Your only hope is to hide, and pray it does not find you."

I turned my head from the edge of the forest and back to Gobber. "I suppose we will have a lot more to document about this dragon once we have its head on display and its heart raised on a sword."

He nodded tentatively and started to remove his hook hand replacing it with a much more formidable weapon. "I doubt we will ever hear of

another Night Fury coming around this island by the time we are finished."

Another roar reverberated from a distance not too far away. They said that war does not determine who is right, only who is left. I did not know if I was in the right, but I knew that I wouldn't be the one who was lost. I planned on being the one who was left.

I quickly scanned the horizon, and pinpointed roughly where the sound had come from. I looked back to Gobber and gave him a reassuring nod. "Well then, let's get to it."

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I rested my eyes upon Hiccup with ease. His acidic streaks seemed to glow as the reflection of sunlight glinted brilliantly upon them. He was curled into a ball, with his tail tightly wrapped around him. His breathing was soothing and consistent.

I was starting to imagine him as a useful dragon. With the right amount of training and effort, he could be stronger than any of the other dragons. He simply needed guidance.

I heaved a weary sigh, and made my way over to where he was laying. || Are you ready to learn how to be a dragon? ||

He brought up his head and lifted his ear plates in curiosity. "Of course. I've been waiting all morning for you to say that."

I brought up a small smile, and gestured with my head to the shore of the pond. || Ok. First thing you need to learn is how to walk. ||

He made an annoyed face, and flattened his ears upon his head. "What are you talking about? I know how to walk. How do you think I made it here? I want to learn how to fly."

I rolled my eyes and slapped my tailfin across his face, resulting in a loud whine from my trainee. || Flying is way farther down the road than what you're ready for. Besides, didn't you fall into this cove while you were supposedly _walking_? ||

He brought his paw up and rubbed his nose while he scoffed at my interpretation. "Well, I know how to walk. Just watch."

He raised himself to his feet and started making his way over to the pond. Every other step, he would raise one of his rear legs until it touched his hip, then stomp it on the ground below. || Wrong! ||

He quickly turned around and stared at me in exasperation. "What, what did _I_ do that _you_ _didn't_?"

I shook my head and rolled my eyes once more. _This is going to be a long day. _|| No one walks like that. || I proceeded with my imitation of his so-called _walking._ Slightly exaggerated, of course. || I could be wrong, but I have never seen a dragon walk with his hind legs moving up and down in such a massive motion. A simple

step is all that is necessary. ||

He watched as I showed the proper way to walk along the shoreline, my steps being taken in even and consistent increments. I trotted down to the far side of the cove and walked at a normal pace on the way back, in order to give him a better view of what he should be doing. || It's not that difficult, and it can't be too different that walking as a mort- a _human. _||

He gave me an almost delighted smile when I finally referred to his prior race as humans rather than mortals. "Alright, so like this?"

He started towards the other side of the cove, turned, and returned, feet out of sync the entire way. || That was better, but you need to walk with your legs in synchronization. You look like an idiot trying to take an individual step per foot. It's much simpler than you're trying to make it. You need to walk with opposing corners in sync. So, your front right with your back left, and your front left with your back right. Just watch me again. I'll go slowly so you can see what I'm talking about. ||

I gradually walked along the shoreline, emphasizing each step to show precisely when to take it. Once I returned he stared at my feet with a confused look. "Why can't you just walk with one side then the other?"

I huffed and rolled my eyes as he thought through the process in his head. || Why don't you try it like that and see how you like it. ||

He gave me a questionable stare then proceeded to attempt his theory of walking. His first few steps went fine, although a bit bouncy. Then his steps became very substantial until finally, his front foot slipped out from underneath him, leading to an inevitable face plant into the ground.

I happily trotted my way over to him and towered over him with a face that said it all. He looked up at me and groaned. "Don't say it."

I stayed silent, but decided to bring my tail around to slap him across the face once more. || Are you going to question what I tell you any longer? ||

He looked up at me and let out an unamused huff. "Just show me how you did it again."

I leaned back and presented him with a toothless smile just before I started walking diligently before him. || Front right, back left. Front left, back right. It's easy once you get used to it. I'm sure you didn't need to think about it as a human, it will be the same as a dragon. Just takes a little bit of time. ||

Once I returned to his side, I gestured with my snout for him to try it again. He heaved a deep sigh, and gradually started to take individual steps just as I had shown him. He carefully thought about which foot needed to be placed at the right time. Once he made it to the far side of the cove, he started returning, but with a much improved pace. || That's more like it. Just continue to walk around until you get a feel for it. ||

I watched as he gingerly sauntered around the depths of our cove, trying to perfect his routine. He progressively gained speed until he was trotting along the shoreline with ease. Eventually he managed to start and look up as he was walking, instead of staring at his front paws the entire time.

His pace had finally grown to the point in which I thought it would be suitable for the next step. || Alright, you can come over here and learn what to do next. ||

He circled around me and kept walking along the shoreline towards the opposing side of the cove. "Just once more, I think I have it almost perfect."

I smirked and sat back down on the ground as I watched him tread his way around the cove. He continued past the point in which he normally would turn around and approached a tree that jutted from the floor surface. He slowed his pace and looked down at his feet as he negotiated each tree root with excellence.

I observed as he circled the tree and started coming my way once again. Suddenly he stopped in place and started flailing his forelegs. He started wailing as he tried to fight off something near his face. In fear that something was actually attacking him, I sprinted over to him in a few easy bounds. || Hiccup! What's wrong? What are you doing? ||

He leapt away from the tree and desperately started rolling in the grass, all the while shouting in terror. "Get it off! Get it off!... Toothless, help!"

He finally swiped his paw across his face and smashed it on the ground before him. He quickly got to his feet without releasing the paw from the ground. Slowly, he lifted the paw and peered underneath it to make sure he captured whatever it was that was terrifying him. I got down close to the ground and observed as he lifted his paw.

Underneath, the remains of squashed spider laid sprawled out in a sticky mess. I brought my head up and gave Hiccup a very irritated expression. || You were freaking out over a _spider_? ||

He removed his paw, and started to wipe away the rest of the spidery mess on the grass nearby. "Spiders are dangerous. They're so small that you never know what kind they are. If the right one bites- "

|| It's a freaking spider! That insignificant little arachnid couldn't hurt you even if it wanted to! ||

He looked at me, almost offended as I stared down at him in frustration. "You don't know that! Some of those spiders have really long fangs that inject veno-"

|| IT'S A FREAKING SPIDER! You really think that a tiny little fang will penetrate your dense scales? ||

He slowly lost the insulted expression and turned to one of confusion. "Are you sure?"

I dropped to the ground and threw my paws over my eyes. || You have
got to be kidding me. ||

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I sat by the edge of the pond, rubbing the edge of my nose with my
paw. Toothless was kind enough to repeatedly smack my snout with his
_half-tail. _

|| I heard that! ||

I rolled my eyes, and turned myself to face the pond directly. My
nose was aching from the number of hits that Toothless had laid on
it. I didn't think that I was _completely _wrong about being scared
of the spider. I mean, if I had been a human, I could have died if
the spider was venomous. At least I now knew that they were
insignificant, but my snout was still rather irritated. I did,
however, manage to get him back though. On his final smack, I opened
my mouth and clamped down upon his tail. After all of the irritating
lashings of his tail, it was glorious to hear his high pitched yelp
in agony. It was nice to give him a taste of his own medicine.
Needless to say, he was now massaging the aching spot on his tail.

I was satisfied.

The morning drifted into the afternoon as the sun slowly meandered up
to the highest point in the sky. I heard Toothless walk up behind me
and sit down. I turned my head to get a full view of him. "Is there
something you want to say?"

He rolled his eyes and scoffed. || If you really think I'm going to
apologize for hitting you in the face then you've got another thing
coming, namely my tail. ||

I was just about to open my mouth to make a sarcastic comeback when
Toothless cut me off. || And if you ever bite my tail again, I'm
going finish the job that I started with you. ||

I raised my head, being supercilious, and huffed. "We're even."

He rolled his eyes and shook his head. || Anyway, I think it's time
that we work on running. ||

I looked up at him in confusion. "Running?"

Toothless nodded in affirmation. || Yes, you need to learn how to run
in case we are ever in danger. Even if you know how to fly, running
is still more important. You can almost always run, but you can't
always fly. ||

I heaved a deep sigh in vexation. Running was not my strong suit. I
could hardly do it as a human, much less a dragon. "Do we really have
to?"

He raised his tail and pulled an irritated face towards me. I gave an
exaggerated sigh to emphasize my displeasure with the activity, and

motioned for him to continue. He nodded and proceeded to get into his running stance. || Alright, you need to know that running is different than just quickly walking. You start to use your front legs at the same time and your hind legs at the same time. It's crucial that know when to thrust with you rear so that you can carry your momentum over your front. The front legs don't actually do much pushing; it's mainly for balance. ||

He leaned back upon his hind legs and stretched out his front far forward of himself. He made the motion slowly, clearly indicating how he was going to push with his rear legs. After a few more motions, he started to thrust himself across the cove. Each time, he would stop and show me the correct time to force downward with his legs.

He continued the demonstration, getting faster and faster with his strides, showing how effective his hind legs were at propelling him forward. Once over to the edge of the cove he leapt on top of a rock then bounded off to the side, skidding across the grass as he struggled to quickly get back to his feet, shrieking violently in the process. "How graceful of you."

He snarled back at me and slowly advanced on the rock once again. With my curiosity piqued, I trotted over to his side. He immediately unfurled his wing to stop me from progressing any further.

With his heavy breathing and his heart beating fiercely, I could tell that he was frightened of something on the other side of the rock. || Don't go any further, it could kill you in an instant. ||

I slowly peered around the edge of the rock and saw the creature that he was supposedly so afraid of. "What's wrong? It's just a little garden snake."

He looked at me as if I had said something preposterous. || Those _serpents _are the dragon's _most_ feared enemy. Their venom has the pow- ||

I cut him off mid-sentence and leapt beside the _most feared enemy. _I unsheathed my claws and swiped it across the snake, successfully propelling it into the pond not too far away.

|| Are you insane?! One drop of that snake's venom could stop your heart. You should never be so reckless around something so deadly! ||

I shook my head and rolled my eyes. "I don't see what the big deal is. I have killed hundreds of them. Their meat is actually quite tasty. There's nothing to be really afraid of as long as you're quick to move it with your claw."

He narrowed his eyes and stared at me, unimpressed. || Says the one who was afraid of a spider. ||

I returned the observation with a near exact imitation of his face. "Yeah, well, at least you can _see _a snake."

He rolled his eyes and shook his head in aggravation. He quickly turned and started trotting away towards the pond.

I slipped a short snicker and narrowed my eyes slowly. Toothless laid

by the pond, watching the water ripple gently as he closed his eyes for an interlude. I heard a ruffling sound, the sound of branches cracking, a quick shuffle of brushing. I assumed it to be nothing. My vocals resounded, coming off as a rumble. I closed my eyes, the time ostensibly well for relaxation.

The movement of branches continued to sound, seemingly closer than before. "I know you're trying to mess with me, Toothless. I can still bite other parts of your body, you know."

I kept my eyes closed in wait. When I felt no sharp slap of a tailfin against my snout, I opened my eyes little by little. Toothless was still resting by the pond, his own eyes hidden under the obsidian lids that kept out the light. "What was that sound, then...?"

I waited quietly, my eyes alert in attention. I turned towards the other side of the cove, looking around closely for anything that might have caused the disruption.

A rustling of the leaves. A shuffle of feet. A draw of breath.

A human breath.

A quick flash of metal caught my eye high upon the rim of the cove.

Ballista.

Immediately, as I saw the weapon and its wielder, I felt my heart drop.

"Toothless look out!"

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><p>AN: Ummm... yeah, I guess I could have mentioned something about that in the first author's note, but it was more fun this way. Well, what did you think? Did you enjoy it? Was it as good as I thought, or am I just completely off with it? Please leave your comments as a review. I don't know what you think unless you let me know.<p>

Anyway, if you loved it, please favorite and/or follow.

Please remember to check my profile page for the current updates.

Milestone of the Week: 50 Favorites and 50 follows! You all are incredible! Thank you!

7. Chapter 7: Quintessence of Equilibrium 2

AN: Well, I'm very sorry about the delay. Work had been extremely busy and the only chance I have to work on this is on the weekend. I know that ending on such a cliffhanger last time probably wasn't the best chapter to have a delay, but at least it's here now.

I give you:

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><p>A Fury's Tribulation<p>

Quintessence of Equilibrium

Part 2

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><p>The feeling of having one's heart sink to the depths of the unknown. The feeling of losing everything that one holds dear. The feeling of failure beyond the point of coming back. I knew everything the moment I saw that weapon, that person, that betrayal. I knew that my retaliation would be worthless, but I was still willing to proceed with it anyway. My defense may be futile, but at least proceedings would happen with my heart not quite as heavy as if I had lain down and accepted my fate as a coward<p>

I looked up to the ledge on which I had once stood before tumbling down into what I now saw as a prison. The two men that stood there now, watching, waiting, targeting- they were out for blood. My blood.

I never once thought about the consequences of turning into a dragon and simply living my life in the woods. I never once thought about what could potentially happen if someone came looking for the old Hiccup; the old Hiccup was not one I cared to remember, but it seemed that pushing him out of my mind had been to my detriment. Never in a million years could I have thought I would be facing what could very well have been my death, my demise, by the hands of my own father.

Time seemed to slow as I saw Gobber taking aim with Ballista.(1) I saw the target that he had within his sights. I saw the Night Fury, who was completely oblivious to what was about to come down upon him. Even with time slowed to a crawl, there was never going to be enough of it. Even if I could save him from one shot of the weapon, there was nothing we could do. The next, and the next, and the next would soon bring us to our knees. We were both trapped among the high cliffs that surrounded us. One of us injured, the other lacking experience. We had little on our side in terms of an advantage. It wasn't a level playing field.

As I shouted to my friend to catch his attention, I heard the snap of Ballista being fired. The projectile sailed through the air just as intended. The weapon was flawless; I knew it would be.

I designed it.

Toothless instantly looked up from where he was laying, just in time to be hit. The shell of the encased shot exploded upon impact, producing an ear-splitting sound that was loud enough to send animals scurrying for miles around. I immediately fell back on the rock in which I was standing on, forced to helplessly watch as Toothless struggled to clear his eyes from the debris of Ballista.

There was nothing I could do. The mere sound of the weapon was strong

enough to paralyze the strongest of dragons for over a minute. I could only watch in horror as my father and Gobber nimbly descended the cove walls into what I now expected to be my final resting place.

I could hardly move; with my paws pressed down on my ear plates with as much pressure as I could muster, I had to watch as my father raised his weapon towards Toothless. When I was finally able to release my paws from my ear plates, the ringing in my head began to wear off. I leapt off of the rock and sprinted over to Toothless, thankful for the little bit of training that I had received from the dragon.

I barreled into Toothless just before I heard the weapon fire, successfully avoiding the incoming bola net. We both fell straight into the pond that occupied over half of our cove, but with the near-freezing temperature of the water, I was out so fast that one could have thought that I walked on water. Toothless scrambled to get to his feet, not knowing which way was up or what had essentially just blinded him. I called over to him to encourage him to swim my way; all the while, Gobber and dad were reloading their weapons.

Toothless managed to finally remove most of the debris from his eyes thanks to the water. He leapt from the frigid water and scrambled to my side. || Hiccup, we need to get out of here, now! ||

Both of us were warily backing away from the two Vikings as they aimed their weapons at us once more. "How do you propose we do that?"

Toothless watched carefully as Stoick pulled his weapon close, ready to fire. As soon as he pulled the trigger, Toothless barreled to the side, effectively evading the net once again. || We're going to have to eradicate these mortals! It's the only way that we'll be able to get out of here safely. ||

Just as he finished speaking, Toothless bounded over to my father, his teeth and claws unsheathed and ready to kill. I felt my heart drop in my chest as the Night Fury barreled towards dad. I couldn't let him kill my father; even though I would most likely wind up being killed instead, I couldn't let him die in my place. It was my destiny to die in this gulch, and mine alone; I was not willing to give up my doomed fate to another, and especially not my father, little though he did for me during my human lifetime.

I took a few leaps and slammed into Toothless just before he made contact with his target. We both rolled several yards away from our attackers, with Toothless landing on his feet, ready to go again. || What the hell is your problem!? I could have killed him right then and there! ||

I scrambled to my feet as Toothless started approaching me in anger. "We can't kill them! He's my father!"

The dragon looked over to the adversary just in time to see another shot from Ballista heading in our direction. We both scattered from the area, but the explosion still managed to impede our senses with the incredible reverberations. I could hardly move, the sound effect nearly crippling me. Toothless, however, managed the task of getting

to his feet and charging into Gobber, successfully managing to knock the weapon away in the process.

We both collapsed on the ground, trying to rid ourselves from the aftershock of Ballista. My father rushed over to help Gobber get to his feet. They quickly started reloading the net launcher together, as it needed two people to do so. Even the burliest Vikings were unable to reset this mighty weapon; the power needed to overcome that of a dragon was far greater than a single Viking could muster.

I finally managed to stumble to my feet; another hit of Ballista, and I would have been down for good. I looked over at Toothless, who was also staggering to his upright position. "Can't we settle this in some peaceful sort of way?"

Toothless looked to me then back to my father just as he finished reloading the weapon. || If you want peaceâ€ then prepare for war. ||

The Night Fury once again started barreling towards the weapon wielder, ready to slaughter him for all he was worth. I knew it was a suicide mission, but I had to stop it. I took off once again, this time with determination fueling every bound. Just as I hit Toothless, my father fired the weapon. We were both sent rolling to the side, only this time we were encased in a corded trap.

As we came to a halt, Toothless desperately tried to free himself from the rope entanglement. I knew that it was hopeless to try and break free; it would only tighten further around us.

I watched as Gobber ran over and picked up Ballista. He forced one more shot into the weapon's barrel. He glanced quickly between us, deciding whose head to take aim on, picked Toothless', and fired.

Just as when I first spotted the men, perched on the ledge above us, time slowed down once more. Sound seemed to completely escape from my ears as I watched through blurred vision, Gobber and my father walking towards us, forms blurred by overwhelming despair and the aftereffects of the explosive weapon.

I could feel Toothless struggling to move as he attempted to escape, but as a blinded, deafened, and flightless Night Fury, it was no use. We were both subject to whatever my father had planned. Toothless could fight as much as he wanted, but there was no plausible way out of this predicament other than a quick and merciful death. Although it did not seem so quick and merciful when we were on the receiving end.

I observed, with the little vision I had left, as my father raised his hammer and slammed it down onto Toothless' head. The body that had once been flailing and fighting with no intent to give up suddenly fell limp beside me. All at once, his violent movements came to a screeching halt, ostensibly a lifeless soul.

My father came to stand over me, staring down with an exasperated expression. He gave me a look of disgust, as if I had been the one to take away the human version of myself. He raised his hammer and took one last look into my eyes. His movement halted, his eyes were frozen on mine. I could almost see him thinking that I was still Hiccup. I

lifted my head slightly, hoping that he would see the person that was encased within the body of a Night Fury.

My hope fell as he managed to banish the thought from his mind. He shook his head in annoyance and brought down his weapon. The pain was quick, and nearly absent in its flightiness.

I fell away into the shadows of my mind.

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We stood over the motionless, almost lifeless bodies of the two Night Furies, heaving for breath; the battle had taken so much out of us. It was as expected, we knew that the dragons would be difficult to put down, and they didn't disappoint. We were fortunate that we managed to catch them, what with Night Furies being the deadliest of the dragon species. Even though we came out victorious, I couldn't stop thinking that we got lucky.

We were the first Vikings to even see a Night Fury and live to tell the tale; it was astounding that we actually managed to capture them. Which didn't help my reasoning that we did it alone.

I couldn't believe how much the smaller Night Fury looked like Hiccup. The resemblance stopped me dead in my tracks. I had noticed that the eyes of the beast were an exact replica of the boy's very own. Even though the larger dragon had similar eyes, there was no doubt that the eyes of the odd looking Night Fury were exactly like Hiccup's once were.

The dragon even looked up to me as if it were trying to tell me something.

I couldn't believe it.

Of the hundreds of dragons that I had killed in my lifetime, not one of them had stunned me as the one seemingly marked by acid that lay before me had. I had never thought twice about taking down a dragon right then and there. Until now.

I let out another exasperated sigh, and looked down at the Night Fury again. "Gobber, I need you to go get the others. Bring back several men, as well as something to transport these beasts back to the village, and some muzzles to keep them from attacking."

I could feel Gobber looking over at me with a questionable face. He was no doubt wondering why we couldn't simply kill the beasts right away. To be honest, I wasn't sure why myself. I just knew that I needed to get another look at the Night Fury. If he was the one to have killed my son, I wanted him to be fully awake as I ripped his heart from his chest, still pulsating weakly with the last few droplets of blood it would ever force through it atria, gently dripping down onto the soon-to-be lifeless body of the beast it had been taken from.

Gobber remained exactly where he was, still questioning my motives.

"Just go, Gobber! Just go and get the remaining Vikings so we can bring these dragons back to the village!"

The man apparently needed no further motivation, as he quickly removed himself from the cove and back into the forest. The man had always been excellent at watching my back, and his perspective was more often than not one to be considered, but this was something I needed to settle myself.

I sat down in front of the net that surrounded the two reptiles. I continued to loom over the dragons, examining all of the distinct features each possessed. The two dragons differed far more than I could have ever imagined. I couldn't stop thinking about all the destruction that they had caused to our village, how such a relatively small dragon could create such an impact, or devastate so many lives.

But while unconscious, they seemed to be essentially harmless. The two dragons simply lay across their paws in a rather cat-like manner. The ear plates that protruded from the tops of their heads seemed to have reflected their emotions while we watched them from above.

I shook my head and turned away from the deceiving creatures. I didn't want to think about how they could be peaceful when they had done so much to prove themselves otherwise. I didn't want to think about how they could be simply misunderstood, when I knew very well that my wife had been killed by one of their kind.

My mind kept tracing back to the battle, back to how we should have lost. At the time it didn't really occur to me, but now that I thought back on it, it almost seemed like the smaller one was trying to protect us. It was like nothing that I had ever seen, one dragon diving onto the other in order to prevent his attack.

But... why would he be protecting me?

It made no sense whatsoever. The smaller dragon clearly didn't want the other to try and kill us. _Did he want us all to himself? Did he want to kill us in a different way? _Neither of those ideas made sense; nothing was adding up. It was obvious though, that when I made eye contact with the strange looking Night Fury there was fear in his eyes, the same look of fear that Hiccup had.

After what felt like ages, I saw a slight movement out of the corner of my eye. I threw myself into a fighting stance in case I needed to kill the beast that was in question. I quickly unsheathed my sword and held the blade over the Night Fury that was slowly coming back to reality.

And once again, I saw his eyes.

The smaller dragon looked up at me with a clearly worried face. He was obviously afraid of what was coming to him. Maybe he had seen what we had done to the dragons that we captured. Maybe he knew that the short lifespan that he had remaining would be excruciating and dreadful.

The one thing that was puzzling me was why he wasn't putting up a fight. Dragons never simply gave up. They always resisted until they were locked away for good. The beast before me had no such

intentions.

He simply stared up at me with his emerald eyes, pleading. _Pleading for what? Does he expect me to just let him go? Does he want me to just release him to be on his merry way? Does he expect me to lay down my defenses and set him free!?!_

But when I thought I couldn't have gotten any crazier by thinking that a dragon was capable of forming coherent thoughts besides fly, shoot and run, he shook his head.

My heart nearly skipped a beat. I thought that I was seeing things. There was no rational way for me to explain it, he had answered my question. _But how did he read my mind? How did he understand my thoughts enough to make a response? Was it just a coincidence?_

But then it happened again. His head shook from side to side just as a human would.

I glared down at the dragon, infuriated. "You did _not _just shake your head at me! There is no way that you could understand what I'm saying, much less read my thoughts!"

The dragon shrunk down in fear. He didn't know how to respond to my anger, he didn't know how to react.

I was breathing heavily, my mind racing, and my heart pounding. I shrieked from anger and picked up my hammer. The Fury continued to look up at me in fear, shrinking down to the ground.

There were voices echoing through the forest. I knew that Gobber was finally returning with the other men so that we could bring the ruthless animals to Berk. I shook my head once more at the horrified dragon and brought down my hammer, the blow knocking him out immediately.

Just as I was recovering from the swing I saw Gobber crest the rim of the cove. He looked down at me with a questionable face. I simply turned and walked away from the Night Fury.

After a few more moments I could feel Gobber's presence at my side. He walked beside me and whispered quietly. "Is everything alright, Stoick? You looked a little spooked when I first spotted you here."

I heaved a deep sigh and shook my head. "It's nothing, Gobber. I'm still just a little shaken up about Hiccup. I feel like it's all just a dream."

Gobber gently patted his hand upon my back and let out a sigh of his own. "There's no need to try and be a hero about this. You have gone through more than any other Viking on this god-forsaken rock. I don't think anyone expects you to simply forget about Hiccup and move on. We wouldn't expect that of anyone."

I closed my eyes and slouched slightly. I wasn't tired from battle, tired from lack of food or water, tired from the long night that I had to endure. I was tired of being distressed. My heart was aching, and the rest of my body was following suit. It was not my time of pride and authority, it was a time of mourning and bereavement, and

there was no room within me to do much more.

I slowly looked up to the closest friend that I had as a tear streamed down my cheek. "I need you to be the chief right now. I need you to get these dragons back to the village. I-â€|. I just need some time to myself."

He didn't say a word. He knew that I didn't want him to. I just wanted him to agree and do as I instructed. He simply nodded, and walked back to where the other villagers had huddled around the unconscious dragons. I could hear him telling the men what to do as I started to ascend the rocks to leave the cove for good. Nothing he said formed into intelligible words to me, remaining just a dull murmur of voices and commands.

If Hiccup's death had yet to hit me, then I knew that it came at that moment. My heart dropped as I took each step away from the cove. I desperately wanted to go back to that night. I wanted to go back and embrace him and his notion about the Night Fury. If I would have followed him into the forest we could have killed the beast together, and not had to deal with the harsh reality that was now taking place.

_I'm sorry, Hiccup. For everything. Odin knows I should have told you this before.
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I could feel my aching head as I was being carried along to whatever wasteland the mortals had in mind for me. I could feel the strengthened bonds that wrapped all around me, along with the metal shackles at my feet. I was truly lost as to how I came into my predicament. I remembered the two mortals coming to fight us, I remembered attacking the two vile creatures, but everything else seemed to be an indistinct blur.

I could feel each and every rock that the cart I was strapped down to passed over. I could hear the constant yammering that the beings around me insisting on vocalizing. Each of them seemed to be ecstatic that they finally had brought down the infamous Night Fury, a few of them curious about who would get to kill the vicious reptile.

Nothing of what the men said gave me any sort of clue as to how I fell into this trap. I kept replaying the situation through my mind, but nothing came to light. The two men must have been more formidable than I had initially assumed.

It was nearly testing my sanity as to why I couldn't figure out how I had ended up where I was. I remembered Hiccup, me being livid with him for something. _But... why? Where is Hiccup?_

I snapped my eyes open to see several men in front of me pulling at ropes that were attached to the cart I was on. I could see the forest around me, the gray sky above me, none of which seemed too familiar.

I looked to my side and saw the dragon that I was captured along with. His breathing was erratic and shaken. His eyes seemed to be clenched as tightly as he could muster, simply wanting to get out of the current situation. His binds were just as voluminous as mine, surrounding him and ratcheting him to his own cart.

It wasn't a pleasant sight to see.

He looked frightened, as if his worst fear had been realized. I could hear his heart pounding and his nervous breaths quickening. I knew that he needed to relax; his heart rate needed to be controlled and he needed to put his mind at ease. || Hiccup. ||

In complete opposition to how I had initially seen him, his breathing ceased, his heart rate slowed, and his eyes shot open to reveal refined slits. He looked over at me with a guilty expression. He didn't want to state the obvious about the situation that we were in. He allowed his breathing to continue as he let out a long sigh. "I'm sorry, Toothless."

His apology caught me off guard. _Why is he saying sorry? What did he do wrong to get us into this mess? _I cocked my head as much as the muzzle would allow to show my confusion. || About what? ||

The Fury's eyes widened and he slowly looked up to me. "For getting us captured, it was all my fault. I-â€|. I just couldn't let you kill him."

I was about to protest when everything flooded back. I remembered him jumping in front of me just as I was going to attack. I remembered him tackling me, which ended up with both of us being intertwined in a net. I remembered him screaming for me not to kill his father. I remembered it allâ€| and it infuriated me.

My ear plates fell to the back of my head and my eyes shrank to slits. I could feel the fire burning in the depths of my throat, desperately wanting to be released upon his unfortunate soul. If it wasn't for the constricting leather that wrapped my snout, the fire would have met its target as soon as the realization had dawned. || You betrayed me. ||

My voice was so low and venomous; it nearly pained me as the words rolled out. I couldn't believe it. After what we had gone through, after what I did for him, he would _still _let me die over the one that was trying to kill him. I shook my head in disgrace and looked away.

"Toothless."

|| Don't call me that. It's not my name, it no longer degrades me.

There was silence for what felt like an eternity. Even the mortals had seemed to fall silent as they wended their way through the forest, pulling with all their might at the carts we resided on. I didn't dare look over to the dragon that had deceived me. I couldn't handle the loss of what I thought was nearly tangible. I couldn't handle the feeling of embracing something so tightly, only to be thrown aside.

Maybe this is why I never had a family.

After about an hour of silence I heard Hiccup speak up. "You can't assume that."

It had been so long since we had spoken that I had forgotten what he was referring to. || Assume _what_? ||

"You can't just base your theory about all families betraying you on me. I understand why you're upset with me-"

|| Oh, _you_ understand, do you!? You understand that the only person that I ever allowed to get close to me took it for granted, and then threw me aside like I was worthless! You understand that for centuries I never so much as spoke a few words with others, much less let them into the depths of my heart! You understand that for the first time in my life, I thought I had someone I could call a brother, only for them to stab me in the back! ||

I was so caught up in my anger as I glared down at Hiccup that I hadn't realized that the cart had stopped moving. The mortals were turned around, staring at me as I growled menacingly at the dragon beside me. One of the men seemed to shrug off the situation as he scoffed at me. "Looks like these two have some issues of their own they need to settle."

The others shrugged, and turned to start pulling the carts once again. My eyes remained locked on Hiccup as he looked up at me in guilt. He knew very well that I was right. He knew very well that I should have killed the men while we had the chance, and he now knew very well why I was so astonished that he would betray me.

I continued to glare at him until we entered a clearing. I looked away and saw the many buildings that the mortals had built. I could see the damage that had been wrought by the most recent dragon raid, and I could see the towers that I myself had destroyed not too long before. I looked around the village to watch as each window was shut to avoid glimpsing the deadly Night Furies. Well, at least one.

The group that was transporting us remained silent. The entire village stayed silent. There were five young members of the village that watched us as we rolled by. I could see Hiccup staring at them intently, as if he knew them very well. I assumed them to be his former friends, even though he had told me how much he was ridiculed by the group of Vikings. I couldn't care less about the younglings though. None of them seemed to pose any threat. Each of them looked to be completely unintelligent or too malnourished to put up a fight.

I looked away just as I heard one of them speak up. "Looks like Hiccup was right about there being a Night Fury in the woods. Too bad he was too foolish to ask for help before trying to take one down."

I glanced over to Hiccup, seeing that the comment had hit him hard. His posture seemed to fall into an even more depressive state than the one he had already been in.

One of the larger mortal children decided to voice his opinion on the subject before we were out of earshot. "Hiccup was just stupid."

Everyone knows the only Viking in training that could capture a Night Fury is me. He was just the only one dumb enough to go and start looking for one."

I rolled my eyes at the overly cocky teenager, and turned forward to where the mortals were taking us. We started our way down a wooden bridge that led to a metal cage-like structure. I wasn't sure what it was intended for, but I was sure that it wouldn't have been a place to release dragons and give them food and shelter.

We were rolled into the structure, and I could instantly see the burn marks scorched on the inside walls. I noticed the remains of several weapons and shields that the mortals used to protect themselves scattered around where we had been brought, which seemed to be an arena of some sort.

One of the two men that we had originally fought pulled down on a lever that was mounted to the wall. After a few moments, two large doors swung open to reveal a small cave dug out from the rock. The two of us were wheeled inside and turned around to see the doors close around us.

I looked down that the cart I was mounted to. It didn't seem to budge even in the slightest as I fought against the restraints. It was clear that I was going to have to wait until the mortals released me to make a break for the entrance, which seemed highly unlikely. Especially with the few men that remained in our cell.

I looked over to Hiccup with disgust. || So this is what you do with the dragons you capture? You chain them down and starve them!? ||

He didn't bother looking up at me. He simply kept his focus on the ground below him. "It's much worse than that."

I shook my head in bemusement. || What could be worse than starvation? ||

He slouched down slightly and let out a sigh. "This is where they train the Vikings. It's where they bring out dragons to fight the young warriors. They keep the dragons fed just enough so they will still fight. That is, until they die from training."

I turned my head as a low growl escaped my throat. || And you say that _dragons_ are malicious creatures. ||

Once again, there was silence between us. Nothing but the constant chatter of the men behind us broke the stony wall of silence that had been built so quickly to separate us from one another once more. I couldn't help but listen in on their senseless chatter. One of them seemed to be oddly amused by the fact that I was missing one of my tail-fins. _I know who to thank for that._

Hiccup turned toward me, obviously hearing my thoughts as I emphasized them. His look of sorrow did nothing to lessen the loathing I had for him at the time.

"Why does this dragon have two tail-fins and the other only has one?"

"I don't know. Why does this one have green slashes across its body

while the other is solid black? Probably because they were born that way, _imbecile_."

I rolled my eyes at the idiotic conversation that the mortals were having. _Isn't it obvious that mine was taken from me?_

One of the men laid his hand on my tail, examining the damage that had been done. I instantly whipped him in the face for daring to lay his hand on me. "Ouch! Damn dragon."

He rubbed the tip of his nose where I had made contact and gave me a glare. One of the other men was laughing from his friend being hit in the face. "That's what you get for questioning things too much."

The curious man shook his head and walked over to Hiccup's tail. He eyed it carefully then walked back to look at mine, from a distance of course. "I'm serious. This one had half of its tail removed. Remember what Gobber said? A dragon without its wings or tail is flightless. I'm sure that this one can't fly anymore."

"Why does this matter in the first place?"

"Don't you see? A downed dragon is a dead dragon. I bet this other dragon was trying to help it escape when Gobber and Stoick found them. That's probably why they were able to capture both of them."

"I still don't see why this is an issue. Why does it matter if one can fly and the other can't?"

The man stood up from beside my tail and unsheathed his sword. "Because it means that _this _one can still escape."

The other man started to catch on to what the man was getting at, and unfortunately I was as well.

I looked over at Hiccup, who was still zoned out and looking at the ground. || Hiccup, you need to move your tail. ||

He glanced up at me with a incredulous face. "Why, so you can bite it off?"

I shook my head as the man started to walk behind Hiccup. || No. You need to move it out of the way before that man _cuts_ it off!
||

Hiccup cocked his head and glanced back to the men behind us. Just as the man raised his sword, everything seemed to click for Hiccup. He shrieked and immediately started to pull back his tail, but just as the man's sword came down and Hiccup pulled away, the two made contact. A clean slice tore Hiccup's right tail-fin clean off.

I flinched at the sound of Hiccup's cries of pain. The blood immediately started flowing from the gash, coating the floor below in red. The Night Fury roared in pain as he desperately tried to free himself from his binds.

I could do nothing but watch.

For the first time since we were captured, I felt bad for the dragon.

I started to have sympathy for him, knowing that he never planned for this to happen. I watched as the men laughed at Hiccup as he writhed in agony. "Look, now they are equals!"

Equals.

The word sank inside me like a rock in the sea. Truth be told, we were equals. We both had no families, we both had nowhere to go, and now we were both flightless _Night Furies._

I had always thought of myself as a Dark Sentry, but, now, with the two of us being the only ones known, maybe we were Night Furies. It seemed like a suitable name for our kind. If this was how a Dark Sentry was to live his life, then I didn't want anything to do with it.

The sound in the room seemed to pull away to dull hum as I watched one of the men pick up the severed piece of Hiccup's tail and bring it to the front of our cell. He took out a nail from his pocket and, grabbing a stone hammer from the floor of the arena, pierced the fin, nailing to the wall in front of us.

Hiccup's eyes were clenched shut as he was still trying to overcome the throbbing from his tail. The man continued to laugh as he and his acquaintances exited the cell, leaving Hiccup and I in the faint light of a single torch.

I glanced over to Hiccup. His eyes finally opened and I saw a tear stream down his cheek. "I'm so sorry, Toothless. Sentry."

I heaved a deep sigh and lowered my head down onto my shackled paws. || It's Night Furyâ€¦.. it's... Toothless. ||

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I awoke to darkness. Total, complete darkness. It was strange, to say the least. I could hear the smooth inhaling and exhaling of the one friend that I still had. He seemed to be asleep, as anyone would be if they couldn't see their paw in front of their face.

The one thing that told me I was awake was the throbbing from my tail. I had no idea that I had put Toothless through so much pain. Even though it made perfect sense that we had both essentially had limbs torn off, I never thought a single tail-fin could hurt so much.

I looked around the room for any source of light, for anything to tell me what and who was in the cell. Unfortunately, nothing was in sight. It must have been night outside, seeing as there wasn't any light even through the cracks of the door. I could only rely on sound, or lack thereof.

I heaved a deep sigh and looked over to where I assumed the Night Fury to be. "T- Toothless?"

His eyes slowly slid open. I was amazed how even without light to

reflect upon his eyes, they still glowed, luminous emeralds on a canvas of black. He continued to look forward towards the ground. || Yes, Hiccup? ||

His voice was low and soft, almost sounding defeated. It pained me to see him the way he was. Even in complete darkness, I could sense that he was slumped down in his chains, completely hopeless to whatever was to come. I now had an entirely different outlook on the Night Fury now than that of what I used to have. A dragon of such raw power and talent, bound to the point where movement was unthinkable.

He slowly turned his head to face me, his eyes questioning me. I let out a deep sigh and looked forward myself. "I wanted to let you know that I'm-

|| Don't apologize, Hiccup. ||

I quickly turned my head toward the glowing eyes that were staring at me. "But it's my fault about your tail, and it's my fault we got captured, and it's my fault that we'll probably not make it out of here."

Toothless seemed to struggle for a moment, then he let out a high pitched whistle that seemed to light the room temporarily. I could see his face for the brief moment, his stern look and his firm decision. || Does it look like I'm upset about any of those things? I made my choice back in the cove that I would stick with you. I made my choice, that no matter what, I would stay by your side. Despite that you are at fault for my damaged tail, you have been willing to risk your life in order to fix it. Before you, I was alone. I had no one in my life. Before you, I was someone who simply went through life wondering if there was more to it. It took me until seeing you lose your tail-fin to realize that you simply trying to protect your old species _as well as _your new species. It took me until then to realize that you weren't trying to betray me to give give me over to the mortals, you were simply in the same situation as I was. Even with the circumstances that we're in right now, my life is still better than what it once was. ||

Then we were back to relying on sound, or lack thereof. Toothless had closed his eyes, the reason for which I could only assume, was because tears were falling. His words made me think of my own situation, the life I had before. I was one who had no life. Toothless had changed me wholeheartedly, not by just transforming me, but by being there for me. I finally had a friend, a brother.

|| We _will_ make it out of here Hiccup, I know it. ||

I was glad that he had such high hopes, but my outlook was a little bleaker. For I had seen what the Vikings did to dragons, and I had seen the suffering that they were put through. I knew what we had coming for us. Toothless had never been exposed to the ways of the Vikings.

I couldn't take away his hope, though. I had to entertain him, even if it was for only a few days. "I trust you, Toothless."

He opened his eyes, looked over at me, and nodded. || And I trust you, Hiccup. ||

We continued to rest in the darkness of our cell. The only sounds were those of the breathing of two Night Furies. Eventually, a sliver of light was visible through the crack in the door before us. It was obvious that daylight was coming, and along with it, the rest of our lives.

I heard some shuffling on the outside of the door where Vikings were apparently gathering. We could hear the massive latch being moved so that the door could once again be opened. My heart started racing as I feared what was to come. I looked over to Toothless, who was eying the crack in the door with great intensity. He was not a dragon to show naked fear. I had never seen that particular emotion portrayed on his face- his courage was far greater.

After a few more moments, the doors swung open to reveal several men with weapons of every sort. One of the men, who I recognized as the twins' father, seemed to be in charge. He slowly walked towards us, and knelt down in order to be eye to eye with us. "We have something special lined up for the two of you. The chief has ordered for some... _different... _accommodations that should suit you just fine."

The man stood up and turned towards his men. I looked over to Toothless, who was still eying the man angrily. He turned to look at me and shook his head. || What are they talking about? What do you normally do with dragons who are rare and sought after? ||

I looked out to the twins' father, who was instructing the men to start taking us out of the Kill Ring. I looked back to Toothless in confusion. "I don't know. Normally they just let the strongest Vikings fight with them, but we're Night Furies. We are on a completely different level when it pertains to dragons."

He looked forward at the Vikings that were coming into the cell. || You don't have any special way of killing dragons that is more harmful or more drastic? ||

I turned towards the men that were pushing me out of the cell and into the open arena. "The only thing I can think of is drowning, but they haven't done that in ages. Ever since one dragon managed to escape before the drowning, they haven't done it since."

I looked back to Toothless who was being wheeled out of the cell as well. He was taking in each and every detail of his cart to see what the easiest escape would be. He writhed within his chains, trying to budge them in the slightest.

I knew that it wasn't the time to try and break free. Even if he were able to loosen his chains enough to break free, there were too many Vikings around to recapture him, or worse, kill him.

I looked forward to see that the men were pushing us back into the village. We had crossed the bridge and went past the town's central square. We rounded the boat docks; relieving me from the notion that we would be drowning right then and there.

We finally came to rest at the doors to the Great Hall. _Why are we at the Great Hall? It's always been the last place that we would bring dragons. _I looked up at the two doors, stretching from the ground just below me far up the side of the mountain. Toothless was

wheeled beside me and he gave me a look of confusion. || What are they doing with us? ||

I shook my head, and watched as the men around us pulled the massive doors open to reveal the cavernous room that could house every Viking on Berk. I turned back to Toothless as we were pushed inside the structure. "I have no idea."

I soon found out why the Vikings had brought us to the heavily used building. I found out why they wanted us to be in the Great Hall rather than in a cell in the Kill Ring. I found out that they didn't want us to be out of sight for any time of the day.

We were to be on display.

As we entered the massive room, there was one object that I had never seen before. Centered on the back wall of the room stood a large cage that was clearly built to hold a very strong creature. We came up alongside the cage and one of the Vikings started fumbling with the lock. I watched carefully as the man finally unlocked the mechanism and swung open the door. I turned my head away from the cell and looked forward.

Then I saw him. My father was standing off to the side of the room with Gobber at his side. He was looking directly at me in frustration. I couldn't take my eyes off of him; I could tell that he knew something was off between us. He could tell that I wasn't an ordinary dragon, that I was different.

I felt someone unlocking the harness that held me onto the cart. I twisted around to see what the men were doing, only to have them all unsheathe their weapons and prepare to strike. I nodded to the man that was still at my side to indicate him to continue.

The surrounding men all looked at each other then back at me with confused faces. The man seemed to shake it off as he continued to unlatch the chains and ropes that held me tight. Once the binds had been removed, they gestured to the inside of the cage. I heaved a deep sigh and slowly walked into the barred mass of metal.

Once inside I turned back to my father, who was still eying me carefully. Gobber seemed to be jabbering away uselessly at his side, but not a word got through. We continued to look at each other, as man and dragon. I had never had the courage to look at him as a human. The man had been so intimidating and so controlling. I never wanted to even spend time with him as he never let the serious expression escape his face.

I heard the latch beside me close, and I turned to find Toothless standing in the cage right beside me. He looked at me with wide eyes and sighed. We both still had muzzles trapping our snouts, but our present situation was far better than being chained down to a rolling cart.

Toothless walked behind me and started examining my tail. I had almost forgotten about the amputation, simply getting used to the constant throbbing that was emanating from it. He continued to look at the half-tail and used his paw to lift it up. I flinched slightly, but allowed him to continue nonetheless. I circled around so I could see the damage that had been done.

It was just as Toothless', but on the opposite side. The entire fin was missing as if it had never been there. The only clue that there used to be something was the scabbed line that ran up the side of my tail, still losing blood in a few remaining spots.

Toothless set my tail down and looked up at me. || It looks like it will be fine, no infections. Unfortunately, this means that neither of us can fly until they are remade. ||

I looked at him slightly let down. "Which means that it's going to be a while?"

Toothless nodded and lay down beside me. || So long as we can figure out a way to get out of here. ||

I turned back to towards where my father was to see that he was walking towards the entrance to the room. Once he made it to the door, he turned to look back at me. I'm not sure if it was the sun reflecting off of his eyes or the enhanced vision that I seemed to now have, but I could have sworn that for the first time in my life, I saw a tear stream down his cheek.

He does miss me after all.

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><p>(1)- Ballista, as it is represented in this story, is a fictional weapon designed by Hiccup that shoots explosive projectiles. They produce an ear-splitting tone that is too high-pitched for humans to hear, but not dragons.<p>

AN: Well, what did you think? Were you upset to find out the outcome? I assure you, I have much more planned for this story. We aren't even half way there yet.

Please remember to review, favorite and follow. I really appreciate it and you have no idea what it means to me.

I want to say thank you to all the betas as well. Without them, this story would not be what it is.

Milestone of the Week: 75 Follows! Awesome! I think this story is receiving a pretty good response so far. Over 6,000 views.

8. Chapter 8: A Fury's Deception

AN: ... Hides away from the eyes of the public. I think I'm just going to post this here...

In all seriousness, I am truly sorry for the delay. There is no one else to blame except myself. I know that none of you want to even start to hear my excuses, so I will spare your time. Please, I just beg for your forgiveness. I know that you have all waited for nearly a year and a half for this update, "but just take this out on me, be mad at me. Just don't hurt the story." (Hiccup in case you couldn't remember that.)

I give you:

* * *

><p>A Fury's Tribulation<p>

A Fury's Deception

* * *

><p>There are many different ways to interpret the world around us. One can see the way of one species, another species, or all of them. You can overlook the world as if not even there, simply as a picture on the wall. The world is everyone's to look at however they choose. I've heard the ones around me ask about what if walls could speak. If they could, the world would simply be madness.<p>

There isn't a soul out there that isn't talked about by one or another. Whether you're a human or a dragon, there is still such a thing as talking behind one's back. If the ones around us knew what we said about them, then they would no longer associate with us. People feel confident in their words when they know that no harm can come from them. The problem with the situation is when they do find out.

There was a quote that I once heard, within that quote, it which said to see behind walls. But I'm not so sure that is for the best. If you see behind the barriers that people choose to place between you, then you're bound to hear more than you are in for. You're going to see what others hide from you.

Unfortunately for some of us, it's unavoidable.

I pressed close against Hiccup, pulling him close with my wing. He was using his paw to cover his eyes, trying to hide his face of agony. I could feel for the Night Fury; he never asked for this, he never asked to find out what his fellow tribe members truly thought of him, or how they thought about the dragons that they killed. He simply wanted to live life to its fullest extent; he wanted to be appreciated for his mind, not ridiculed for his flaws.

Humans, as I have been told, are a species of greedy, materialistic beings that selfish beyond belief. If one trips and falls in the rain, is another going to go and help him to his feet? Absolutely not, why would they risk getting wet or mud on their boots? Dragons might not be a perfect species by any means, but we do look out for each other. There was a reason that I didn't kill Hiccup back in the cove; there is a reason I didn't let him freeze to death; there is a reason I didn't tear him limb from limb when he got us captured. It's called compassion, something these demented freaks are incapable of feeling.

Dragons see the world for themselves, but they also see for others. If one dragon is in a fight with another, they think about the outcome, they think about what will happen to the adversary. We think about what will come to the dragon before us. Is it their fault for what happened? Did they do anything to deserve this? Then why are we fighting? The mortals themselves always gave us plenty of an excuse to let loose our fire, there was really no reason to take it out on

ourselves.

Treat others the way you would like to be treated. It's very simple, if you are going to be the one who goes around taking what's not yours, damaging the ones around you, then you should expect that in return. I've heard numerous times our species being referred to as mindless beasts, _oh the hypocrisy_.

I think it's slightly easier for a dragon like myself since we are not as materialistic as our mortal counterparts. We don't live to have millions of things to call our own; we don't live to have a currency that puts a value on every tangible item. If another being has something you want, you leave him be and go find one for yourself. There's no need to try and steal from him or see what it would take for him to part with it. We only stole from the ones who tried to take our lives; the mortals were never ones to cooperate.

From the little that I have witnessed with the mortals, they seem to only be the selfish monsters that I had originally assumed of them. What I couldn't understand was how Hiccup ended up the way he had. How could he be so caring, so forgiving, and so loyal? As a dragon, I was proud to call him my friend; if he had started life as a Dark Sentry, there was no doubt in my mind that he would be favored upon. His ideas and his mind would bring him much farther in the dragon world than in the human realm. He wouldn't be ridiculed day in and day out for thinking outside of the box.

I could simply care less about what the humans thought about us. I knew that they were misunderstood, and I knew that they were misinformed. Hiccup, however, had a previous life with these people; he knew what their lifestyle was, he knew what they cared and did not care for. Apparently what one of the things he didn't know was how they truly felt about _him._

"He was just a worthless scrawny lad who did nothing but cause trouble. Why is it that we need to risk _our _lives with these two mindless beasts for that insignificant nuisance?" There were several conversations spreading throughout the room in which I was told to be the 'Great Hall'.

Doesn't seem so great to me.

Hiccup looked up to me with saddened eyes. The hearing of each other's thoughts was still somewhat new to me. It was only on occasion that we would notice the other person thinking, usually when the thought was pronounced or elicited with emotion. Even so, it seemed to be happening more frequently as we spent more time with each other. I looked down at Hiccup in sorrow; his eyes were glassy as they reflected the room's dim light. He let out a deep sigh and rested his head once more. "I never used to see this place as dread and remorse. I used to come here to get away from everything that went on around the village. I could usually find a corner to hide in and no one would bother meâ€¦ I just never realized how much they talked about me when they knew I wasn't around."

A few men came beside the cage in which we resided and scowled brusquely. "I can't believe that Stoick wants to keep these hideous creatures in the Great Hall. It's a disgrace even keeping them alive as long as we have."

I gave the man as much of a hiss as I was able to just before his friend spoke up. "Well it's not like we can do anything about it. You know how it is, whatever the chief says goes, even if the chief is the one who brought us the biggest failure of a Viking this village has ever seen."

I growled lowly at the men as they walked away, the ignorant Vikings not knowing how powerful their words could be. I felt Hiccup shift slightly beneath my wing, trying to get as comfortable as possible. "Thirty-eight."

I crooned slightly as I looked back down to the dragon at my side. He had turned towards the back wall so he wouldn't have to face the Vikings who loathed him so much. He had been counting all the people who he didn't know disgraced him behind his back.

"This is all Hiccup's fault!"

I glanced over to the far side of the room where the voice had originated, only to turn back to Hiccup. || Thirty-nine? ||

Hiccup seemed to shrug slightly. "No, that was just Sven, he's always hated me. It was something about me setting fire to his sheep when I was little."

I tried to picture the image in my head, a bony little Viking messing about and a sheep getting knocked into a fire pit. Admittedly, it was a little comical. Hiccup turned around as soon as he heard me chortle, eyes livid. || What?! I'm sorry, but picturing that tiny human running around this village chasing after a flaming sheep with another larger Viking running around chasing the boy got to me. ||

After giving me a death stare for a short period of time, he rolled his eyes and started to laugh himself. "Well, I think it would have been fine if the sheep didn't end up leaping off of the cliff side attempting to put himself out. I had flaming, flying sheep in my dreams for weeks."

I smirked and rolled my eyes as well. || Did you ever find the sheep? ||

Hiccup tried to look away almost out of embarrassment. "Well, the whole ordeal happened in the middle of a dragon raid so halfway down the cliff side a Monstrous Nightmare grabbed sheep and flew away, still on fire of courseâ€|. I guess that's why I always dreamt the flaming sheep to be flying."

It took a few more seconds, but Hiccup and I burst out in unison, laughing as much as our muzzles would allow. Despite the situation that we were both in, it helped to have some comic relief. Even in times where all hope seems lost, finding the better perspective on things always helped.

It also made for a good time when we both turned around to see several men gawking at the odd noises that we were making. || We wouldn't sound so distorted if it weren't for these leather straps you tied around our snouts. ||

Obviously my language to them only came out as the growls and hisses that accompanied it. The men simply shrugged it off and went back to their daily lives, returning me to Hiccup who still held a massive grin as he tried to hide his laughter. He reduced his grin to a simple smile and nodded to me. "Thanks Toothless, we've only known each other a week and you already know how to keep my spirits up."

I shook my head and rolled my eyes, letting a short warble escape. ||
I also know how to strike fear into your veins. ||

I narrowed my eyes and lowered myself close to the cage floor. He sat up with a questionable face. "What are you doing? Ahhhh-"

Just as he finished speaking I took the opportunity to pounce on him. I grabbed him within my claws and rolled over him and into the back side of the cage, letting out menacing growls in the process. I raised myself above him and pinned him to the floor, giving him no opportunities to escape from my wrath. Even with the restrictive muzzle, I was able to bare my razor sharp serrated teeth. Giving a deathly growl, I caused the unfortunate dragon beneath me to shrink down in fear. I breathed in through my teeth, giving the appearance that I was about to unleash fury down onto my friend.

But I didn't.

I turned my head towards the frozen crowd that had formed outside of our cage. I leapt from Hiccup's body and slammed into the side of the cage, successfully causing everyone nearby to frantically jump back out of fear, terrified.

I don't think they were expecting the dragon to fall to the bottom of the cage letting out distorted laughing sounds. I could sense that each one of the Vikings were staring at me in frustration. They figured that they should be the ones mocking us, not the other way around.

My joys of laughter soon came to a halt when a single tailfin abruptly came down upon my snout. "That's for scaring me."

This of course only added to my laughter, giving Hiccup a chance to roll his eyes and let out a few chuckles of his own. || I told you I could scare you. ||

Hiccup shook his head and grinned at me. "Yes, congratulations, you can successfully scare what used to be a ninety pound boy who spent the majority of his life running from his enemies and trying not to be afraid of everything that moved. Don't you feel accomplished?"

I came to rest upside down looking up at the oddly colored dragon. ||
It's always an accomplishment when I overpower someone. ||

The Night Fury simply scoffed and lay back down once again to get comfortable. I glanced over to the doorway in which the men had brought us in through. The sun was fading and night was beginning to take over.

I turned towards the Night Fury who was resting at my side. The enthusiasm seemed to have been lost from his facial expressions. He no longer was distracted by the surrounding Vikings or from my antics. His face morphed back into the depressed state that from

which I couldn't seem to keep him from. || What's wrong now? ||

My tone was not of sarcasm or disrespect, more of caring and concern. He breathed out a long sigh and clenched his eyes shut, trying to keep the inevitable tears from falling from his eyes. "Toothless?"

I took a moment to respond, he seemed genuinely upset. It seemed almost ironic, the great fearsome Night Fury, broken down to the point of weeping. || Yes Hiccup? ||

He turned on his side, pressing into me, as if he were safe under my wing. "Are we going to get out of here? I mean, I'm not ready to die, especially by my father's hand. I don't want to spend the last of my days trapped in a cage waiting for my executioner to decide when to bring down the ax."

I scanned over the dragon; the emerald slashes that covered his body now seemed to be a dulled shade, as if reflecting his own emotions. I slowly lay down next to him and brought my wing around him. Not that I wanted to have to care for a young dragon, but Hiccup was becoming far more of a friend to me than I had ever expected, - I was willing to comfort him just as he would do for me. I brought my snout over and gently nudged Hiccup's own. He gradually peeled open his eyes and looked to me in despair. || Hiccup, I promise that we are going to get out of here. I will make sure that you don't spend your final days in fearâ€¦ you have my word. ||

The dragon seemed to relax slightly, letting out a near silent croon that would be inaudible to the humans. After a long period of silence, Hiccup shuffled himself slightly, finally allowing himself to fall asleep. "Toothless, I just want to let you know how thankful I am to have you as a friend. I know that you probably wish that you could just go back to how things were before you met me, but I want you to know that if it were up to me, I wouldn't go back."

His statement caught me off-guard. Leaving me questioning whether or not if I felt the same. Soâ€¦ did I? Would I really go back to how things were if I had the chance? It was definitely something to consider, but would it be worth it? My life before was nothing to brag about. I had to watch as dragons every day died for something that they believed loved them. The only benefit would be that I could still fly and I wouldn't be trapped in a cage. For some reason though, it just didn't seem like enough. Hiccup had shown me true friendship, something that was so rare in the world that we lived in. I couldn't help feeling like if I were to go back to how things were, I would miss that care and affection that Hiccup had shown me. Noâ€¦ I know I would miss it; I would crave it.

|| If it were up to me, I would be at your side, shielding you from the Vikings who despise us so much. ||

And once again, I felt the Night Fury under my wing relax, as if the weight of the world had been lifted from his shoulders.

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Time seemed to drag out as I continued to stare at the back wall. I was still nervous about what was to come. I didn't know if Toothless would truly be there for me, or if he would simply run off the first chance he had.

I knew that the Night Fury cared; he emanated emotion, but was it enough? Toothless had proven to me that he wouldn't stab me in the back; I knew that he was concerned for me just as I was for him, I could somehow feel it deep inside my chest.

But what did I know?

From what I could tell, I knew as little about dragons as what I thought I knew about humans. It had been proven to me time and time again over the past several hours that what I thought about my village, everything I knew, was wrong. Even the people who I had assumed were relatively friendly to me were announcing how much of a mistake I was.

Toothless seemed to shuffle slightly at my side. I was trying to seem like I was asleep. I didn't want him worrying too much, - I didn't know what he would do. I kept telling myself that he was a friend, which he was there for me. As much as it seemed to be true, I just didn't know if I could believe it or not.

Before Toothless, I had no idea that dragons could be so intelligent. Were all dragons this complex? Were some even smarter?

I kept imagining that if by some miracle that we were to escape, what would I do? Where would I go?

Even if Toothless were to stick with me, which I could only pray that he would, what would we do? He mentioned something about being able to repair our tails so that we might be able to fly, but would I even be able to figure it out?

I sincerely doubted that I as a dragon would be able to fly. I was born a human, destined to be earthbound. There was a reason I was born a human instead a dragon, I just wasn't sure of the reason. I wanted to believe that the gods somehow felt that I had a purpose with the dragons, as if I were a dragon because they needed me to be.

It was probably just dumb luck. At least I considered myself lucky by that point, rather than mourning the stupidity of fate which had brought me to my current situation.

I rolled my eyes and snorted quietly, frustrated with myself. Even if I was destined for something more, what was I doing locked in a cage having to listen to how everyone I used to know hated me?

I desperately wanted to leave this place, go out and simply learn more about the life of a dragon. As far as I was concerned I didn't know the slightest about being a Night Fury. If I could at least learn about the dragon species, potentially figure out a way to communicate with the humans, maybe I could be some help, maybe there would be a way to minimize casualties among the Vikings.

But why should I help the Vikings in the first place? I let out a shaken sigh. Why should I help the ones who could care less for me in

the first place? All they would ever do was laugh at my mistakes and ridicule me for simply being around.

It wasn't easy... as much as I hated to think about it, the Vikings were never there for me, they were never even kind or caring. If I was completely honest with myself, it hurt. I had already known that the general consensus about me was unfavorable, but was I really that bad? From what I could hear from the surrounding crowds, they felt thrilled that I was gone. For them, it was a miracle. They would never have to know what it was like to be led by a failure. I guess I would never have to find out what leading a group of violent Vikings who hated you was like, either.

For me, it was almost heartbreaking.

>All the people that I grew up with, all the people that I spent my day to day life with, all the people that I had once assumed to be friends, simply disgraced me.<p>

It was a terrible feeling. I not only felt deceived, but also betrayed. I couldn't believe how just one day of seeing the true sides of the people who I thought I knew would change my view on them so much.

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The Night Fury.

It was all that consumed my thoughts. Ever since we returned with the beasts in chains, I couldn't stop thinking about the way that the dragon had looked at me. Looked _to _me.

It wasn't the typical way for any being to look to another, it was more of a silent cry for help rather than the deadly growl that I so wished it to be. If the dragon would have just lashed out at me, if it would have just given me a hint of the hatred that I knew it must have possessed; I would have reason to slit its throat.

But no, of course it wouldn't. Even as we made eye contact in the Great Hall, the deadly beast gave me the look of hope and faith, as if _I _were the answer to its problems. But why _me_? Why would it single me out amongst the crowd? Why would it look to me who was standing at the opposite side of the room, rather than the Vikings that were just a few feet from its cage?

I threw my mug across the room, the mead fueling the fire before me in a quick burst. The stein shattered into pieces as it slammed into the front door of my home.

"Oi, what seems to be the problem in there?"

_Gobber_â€|. I should have known that he would come over for a few glasses of mead. He pushed the door open, his face dimly lit by the moonlight. I wasn't in the mood to talk; even though he would be the one person to listen, I couldn't share my thoughts... w_ouldn't_.

He politely made his way into the room, eyeing me carefully along the

way. Once across the fire from me he looked down and sighed. "Look Stoick, I'm sorry."

Sorry, for what?

He sat down on the bench and shook his mead-filled mug hand, it somehow not seeming appetizing to him anymore. "I know what happened to you must be unbearable. I couldn't imagine having to go through what you are right now, butâ€¦" He paused for a moment, trying to build up the strength to say what was on his mind.

"But what?" My voice was ragged and hoarse, as if without nourishment for days on end. He looked up from his mug and straight into my eyes. "You seem to have other things on your mind."

Oh, because having my one and only son die is not enough? I'm too much of a selfish bastard that I would need something else to trouble me along with the death of my heir! I scoffed at the man and shook my head. "Hiccup was the runt of the tribe, everyone hated him; they hated me for bringing him into this world. Even I would occasionally question if it was worth it to keep him aroundâ€¦ So why is it that when he is gone, I want nothing more than to bring him back?"

The man seemed taken aback by my answer, having trouble finding a response. He sat quietly for a few moments before he seemed to come to a solution in his head. "It's not something I'm completely familiar with, but I know of its powers." The man paused, waiting for me to make eye contact. "It's called love, Stoick... it's the ability that one has to look past another person's flaws, only to find their strengths. It's the feeling of respect towards another being, enough to see the greatness that they hide away. It's the look in one's eyes, to see that they want nothing but good for you, even when you have treated them so wrong."

I thought back to the last set of eyes that I really concentrated on, the last emotion that I saw in them.

Love.

But how could it be? How could it have been love in the eyes in which were worn by a devil? I turned my attention back to the fire before me. The flames and the crackling of the wood seemed to dull my senses, lulling me in. I tried to imagine a scenario in which it was Hiccup who had looked at me with those eyes; I tried to imagine him giving me that look of pain, that look of pleading, the look of love.

I could see his eyes before me, but as the picture moved away to see the rest of the body, the Night Fury took his place. I shook my head and looked back up to Gobber. "To see that they want nothing but good for you, even when you have treated them so wrongly?"

The man eyed me carefully then nodded, a small smile creeping across his face. I had a hunch, and I was willing to bet that he knew it. The man knew me better than any other Viking of the Isle of Berk. He shook his head and rolled his eyes, both while drinking down the last of his beverage. "You better tell me what you got going on in that head of yours Stoick. It wouldn't take much for the rest of the village to think that you have gone crazy now."

I scoffed and raised myself to my feet. "I need to go speak with someone."

Gobber nodded approvingly and started to follow me out the door. "Great, I love going to wake people up at midnight for a casual drink and a chat."

I stopped as soon as my foot hit the ground outside of my home, turning back to face Gobber. "Uhh, Gobber, I think it might be best if you sit this one out. Nothing personal to you, it's just, well, personalâ€¦ to me."

The man looked almost dejected as I started backing away into the village. "Fine, but next time I get to be the one to wake them up. I have many ideas on how to do so."

I rolled my eyes and turned away. For some reason I doubted that those ideas would work out for the two particular beings I had in mind. "Whatever you say, Gobber."

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Sleep was something that I rarely got much of. It was something that I truly loved: how rejuvenating, how calm and serene it was, it was great. But for some reason I could never fall into the deep state of rest. My mind was always active, never wanting to let go and wait for another day. I always had something on my mind that would keep me from the little bit of cherished sleep that I craved.

Tonight was no different.

No matter how much I tried, no matter how long I left my eyes closed, I couldn't fall asleep. The dragon on my side kept my mind racing, my worry for his wellbeing an endless cycle of unanswerable questions. I felt that it was my responsibility to keep Hiccup safe; I felt that if something were to happen to him then it would be my fault. I didn't want Hiccup to lose his life without having any knowledge about how to protect himself.

I now wished that I would have taught the Night Fury how to use his fire before, rather than contemplating on his trustworthiness. I would be less worried about his survival if he knew some basic flaming methods. Unfortunately we had no possible way for him to even attempt his fire while that thick leather wrapped around his snout.

I scanned the body that laid calmly at my side. _At least someone can get some sleep. _He was peaceful in his sleep, as if under the care and protection of someone that kept him safeâ€¦ I just wished I could be that person.

I sighed and turned away from the dragon, eyes wandering over to the entrance of the Great Hall. It wasn't long before someone opened the massive door and stepped inside. With the dim light that filled the room, it was difficult to make out the man's features, but he made his way closer and closer, I could see that it was the man that we

faced in the cove. _Hiccup's father._

The burly man cautiously walked up to the side of the cage, peering in to see Hiccup. I took the opportunity to cover the dragon with my wing, effectively removing him from the man's sight. I was surprised to see that he sighed, as if disappointed with my actions. I eyed him carefully, being wary of his every movement.

It bothered me that the man would come alone, and in the middle of the night. _Does he want to kill us by himself, only to take all the glory for himself?_

He looked up from the ground and into my eyes. I resisted the urge to growl; I didn't want to rouse Hiccup from his sleep, especially for him to see that his father was paying us a visit. It would not be something to help his current situation. I continued to simply stare down at the mortal, trying to figure out his motives.

After what seemed like ages, he sighed and turned to leave. I watched as he walked a few feet away then stopped, slumping his shoulders. He turned once more and marched back to face me once again. "Alright dragon, I need to ask you a few questions."

I cocked my head to the side and gave the man a look of confusion. I wasn't exactly sure how he going to fulfill his quest for information. He looked at me as if waiting for a response, as if asking for my permission.

To be honest, I was stumped. What was he thinking that he would gain from this? Two dragons in a cage weren't exactly a pit of answers for the mortals. Why couldn't he just go and talk with one of the other dragons that were chained down in his prison? The more I thought about it, the more I could care less to cooperate. He had been the cause for Hiccup's pain - why should he even have a chance to make it worse?

I slumped down next to Hiccup, bringing my lone tailfin around to shield my face from the chief. I could hear as the chief groaned, frustrated with my actions. I didn't care. I had heard enough from Hiccup to know that the man had already done enough damage.

I flinched as I heard the grinding of wooden feet being dragged across a stone floor. I lowered my tailfin and glared at the man who was now seated just outside of our cage. I rolled my eyes and groaned myself, raising my fin once more.

Apparently the man wasn't leaving anytime soon.

The room seemed to stay silent for just long enough for me to relax slightly. I had nearly fallen into the abyss of sleep when a thump on my wing brought me back to reality. I raised my head and growled lowly at the chief. He was truly testing my patience.

The man simply smiled smugly at me and waited for a response. I desperately wanted to break free and rip the man's face from his skull. I closed my eyes for a moment, attempting to banish the thought from my mind; it wasn't worth waking Hiccup. I glared back at the chief, letting him know that he had my attention. _Whatever it is that you want, just get it over with._

The man smiled, showing his arrogance about him getting his way.
"Look dragon, I don't know what you are, why you raid my village, or what you and your friend were doing on my island. All I want to know, is what did you do to my son?"

I still didn't know how what he expected me to do, just open my mouth and start speaking just as the voracious humans? I thought about the man's question, glancing down at Hiccup in the process. _What did I do to your son?... I'm not really sure if I'm honest. _I scanned the body next to me, it was difficult to imagine that the boy that the man was referring to and the Night Fury that was resting at my side were one and the same.

I looked back up to the chief, debating whether or not I should tell him. _How would he react? What would he think? What would he do? _I supposed that it was worth a shot. It was obvious that he still cared for his son, even if he never bothered to show it while the boy was a human.

But I couldn't help but question whether or not the man _deserved_ to know. After everything he did, after everything that had said to his son, about him, did he deserve to know that he was still alive, still existing?

It wasn't my choice to make.

If Hiccup were awake he would have been desperately trying to convey that _he _was the boy the man was searching for, _he _was the man's son. I breathed a sigh, still angry with the man for robbing me of my precious sleep. I eyed the man carefully, making sure that I had his attention, making sure that he would understand. Once satisfied I used my own eyes to gesture to the dragon sleeping peacefully at my side.

The man seemed to question me for a moment, looking back and forth between me and his son. "Are you saying that _he _is the one who killed my son?"

I shook my head. _No, that would be meâ€|. _

I regained eye contact, making sure that I had his complete attention. His eyes were locked on mine, he _needed _to know. Using my tail as a more deliberate approach, I directed it straight at Hiccup then at the chief himself.

The chief still had a confused look on his face, trying to work out in his head what I was portraying. He looked down at the floor below him pointing back and forth between Hiccup and himself, repeating the motion.

He looked back up to me, his mind still muddled. "Are you trying to say that _he _isâ€|. "

I nodded.

"Odin help usâ€|. "

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I awoke the next morning earlier than I would have liked. I seemed to never quite make it to sleep after _conversing _with the Night Fury. I couldn't get it out of my thoughts. _Did he really want me to believe that Hiccup was a Night Fury?_

I knew the beast was up to something; it was just some elaborate scheme to let me release him. While the dragon's theory seemed to be similar to what I had been thinking, I knew it wasn't true; it couldn't be. There was no possible way for a human to be trapped in a dragon's body. There was no way my boy could be something as horrific as a NightFury_. But why did it have to be __**that **__Night Fury? Why couldn't he just have tried to save himself and told me that __**he**__ was Hiccup?_

From the time that we captured them the green scarred dragon had some sort of anomaly about him. I just couldn't place it. It seemed as if he were almost trying to protect us. He seemed as if he were on _our _side.

It was the other dragon though that made me come to my senses. The way he protected the other dragon made me realize that it couldn't be Hiccup. _Why would a dragon protect a human that had turned dragon? _It simply wasn't possible. It was more likely that the other dragon killed Hiccup but was able to take his eyes, take the little bit of appearance to make me _think _that he could potentially be my son. It was all a lie.

But nowâ€¦ I had to do something.

I now had half the village questioning whether or not I was _capable _of being chief, whether my judgment had been influenced. I had to do something; I had to ensure that my wisdom and intelligence would not be doubted.

I couldn't simply kill the beasts - the people would question why I wouldn't have just done that in the first place. I needed a reason as to why I kept them around, why I didn't slit their throats when I first had the chance. _But what?_

I opened the door from my home to see the desolate village. It was too early for anyone to be roaming around at this hour. The only ones who should be awake are those who were dozing in my watch towers. _A lot of good they're doing right now._

I began to wander the village, _my village, _keeping an eye out for anyone or anything that would be a threat to my people. I couldn't stand to lose another person over my lack of attentiveness. Hiccup didn't deserve to die, he didn't deserve to have the world against him so much that he took it on alone.

It bothered me more than anything, _as it should have I suppose_. Why did it have to be Hiccup that went after a Night Fury? At least if another one of the teens were to come across a dragon they could potentially have a fighting chance.

It wasn't that I didn't have any confidence in Hiccup; he was truly gifted when it came to creating new and useful weaponry, something

that I never told him. Any time he came up with something that was potentially beneficial to the Vikings I made sure to confiscate the item and all drawings associated with it. I was always so nervous that if he actually made something that worked it would be the death of him. _Unfortunately, this seems to be the case._

I cared for my son, I knew that I loved him as my own, he just made all the wrong mistakes. It didn't matter that he didn't have the frame of a Viking, he just needed the soul, something which he clearly lacked.

Killing dragons was in our blood. It was what we did, what we did to survive. But when Hiccup tried himself, it was only beneficial for the beasts. As much as I wanted to see him succeed, I knew that killing the beasts was not his destiny.

I was kicking myself for putting my son down as if I were better. _Like I have any room to gloat._ I didn't even know what _my _destiny had in store for me. Of course I always aspired to be chief, to be the one that my village looked to in times of desperation. But for some reason, it just wasn't enough.

I knew that I couldn't have been placed in this world just to be there for my village. If that were the case I wouldn't have had a family, had a son. I knew that Hiccup was part of my destiny, I wouldn't have been gifted him from the gods if he weren't. Even Valka knew that Hiccup played a much more important role than I ever thought he would.

Did I fail my destiny?

I couldn'tâ€¦| wouldn't. I knew that Hiccup was still out there. I knew in my heart that some part of his soul was still raging on and that I had to protect it. There was no way that a Night Fury was going to keep me from protecting my son.

Whether or not the beast was telling the truth, I needed to be able to talk with the other dragon. I needed to find out what he had done to my son.

I looked down to the ring, seeing the cages locked safely away from the people, each of the dragons separated from their peers. I couldn't try and speak with the Night Fury if his brother was right there next to him. I needed to be able to intimidate him, tear him down until I found out exactly what happened to my son.

I will kill every last dragon until I know what happened to him.

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|| Hey! Wake up. ||

I groaned as Toothless began to nudge me with his snout. I wasn't ready to get up; I just wanted to rest for the little time that I probably had. "What's the use? It's not like we're going to be

getting out of here any time soon. Why can't you just let me sleep?"

I felt the persistent dragon once again nudging my side, becoming more and more determined. || Because you have been asleep for nearly the entire day and I'm getting tired of having to hold your head up with my paw. ||

I raised my head and looked down at the arm below, somewhat shocked that it wasn't the pillow I thought it was. "There's no way I was asleep for the whole day."

Toothless turned his head and gestured to the doorway that was open to the outside world. I could see that the sun was barely showing itself on the horizon, indicating that it was nearly nighttime. I thought back to when I had fallen asleep; it had been past sunset, the Vikings had already finished their dinners. "But I don't understand, how could I have slept the _entire _day?"

Toothless shrugged and began to stretch. || I have no idea, but all I know is that is the _last time _that I offer my paw as your pillow for the night. I don't think I will ever regain the feeling back in my arm. ||

I stared at him, slightly confused. "I still don't understand it though. I don't think I have ever slept for more than about ten or twelve hours. Even then I would still wake up periodically to see what time of day it was."

Toothless gave me an unimpressed stare. || Well whatever the reason is, you should be plenty rested up for the next several cycles. ||

I looked away from the dragon, still not satisfied with an answer, but I felt that I could figure that out later. "So what happened with all the Vikings today?"

Toothless looked out among the crowd who were now sitting down to eat their nightly meals. || Not much. There were a few younger mortals that came over to the cage. I gave them a terrifying growl and laughed as they each jumped about ten paces backward."

I smiled at the Night Fury. It was about time they got a little bit back of what they'd dished out. "Well I certainly wish I could've seen that."

He seemed smug as he leaned back against the heavy bars that lined the cage. He scanned the group of Vikings and paused when he came across Gobber and Dad. The dragon sighed as he turned away from them and back towards me. || I met your father. ||

I jerked my head back up and gave him my attention. "You what!?"

The dragon sighed and looked down at his feet. || Heâ€¦ || The dragon paused for a moment, contemplating whether or not to tell me. || He came by late last night when everyone was gone. He started asking me questions. ||

I stared back at him perplexed - it wasn't like my father to go and speak to a dragon. "Are you sure that it was _my _father?"

He simply nodded, gesturing over to my dad with his tail. || It was him. He pulled the same scent that you do; he even has a few of the same features that you did as your human self. ||

I chuckled slightly at the notion. I couldn't think of anything visually that could potentially tie the two of us together. I just didn't feel like trying to explain it to a dragon. "I'll take your word on that one, but exactly what kind of questions did he start asking you?"

Toothless seemed to still himself. I had never seen the dragon in this position. It was like he was actually nervous about something. The Night Fury had always seemed to be so sure of himself. "Come on now, spit it out."

The dragon was giving me an unimpressed stare as he whipped me on the back of the head with his tail. || How am I supposed to spit anything out with this muzzle on? ||

I rolled my eyes and gestured to my father. "It was just an expressionâ€¦ now, what was it that my father asked you?"

The Night Fury shifted slightly, still unsure with himself. || He asked why we were here, why were we raiding the village... he asked what we did with his son. ||

What did _we _do with his son? I couldn't exactly come up with an answer for that one. I wouldn't be able to tell him what happened to me even if we could speak the same language. "How did he expect you to answer in the first place?"

|| That's what I was thinking! I honestly don't know what it is with you mortals and thinking that every being in the world should be able to listen to you and respond accordingly. ||

I sat quietly for a moment, thinking about how he would react if he knew that _I _was his son. He'd probably just kill me anyway thinking that I was some possessed creature that was simply trapped in a dragon's body. "So how _did _you answer him?"

He paused once more, the nervous feeling coming back to him. || I pointed to you, implying that _you _were his son. ||

I gave him a questionable stare, thinking that he would never get the message across. "And what did he say?"

He turned and looked over to my father once more. || He seemed to understand what I was trying to say. He seemed shocked that you could actually be his son... he was a little shaken up by it, but after a few minutes of thinking over, he simply got up and left the building. With the way he spoke, he seemed to accept it, but now he actually doesn't seem like the same person as he did last night. Now he just looks like he's upset and wants to take his anger out on something, or someone... do you think he believed me? ||

I was just about to respond as Dad got up from his seat and walked up to the front of our cage, clenching his axe tight within his grip. He looked as if he didn't get a minute of sleep the night before. The dark bags under his eyes gave his stare an even more menacing look than he normally had when he was angry. His voice was low and full of

anger and disgust. "Bring them to the ring."

I looked back over to Toothless, fearing for what was to come next.
"No, I don't think he believed you."

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><p>AN: Well, I'm not expecting much from this. I know that I'm probably on most of your number 1 hate lists right now, so I can't expect much as far as a welcome back. But once again, please review. Let me know whether or not you have enjoyed this story up until this point. I will say that it has been a joy writing it.<p>

I want to say a BIG thank you to Absi B, Modest Dragon, and OnyxDragonX. Each of them helped generously throughout this chapter.

125 favorites! 130 follows! Over 100 reviews! 15,000 views! Thank you all so much!

End
file.